

# Thought and Form in the Essay

*Expository—Familiar—Argumentative*

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THOUGHT AND FORM IN THE ESSAY

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## *Preface*

THIS book is intended for use in college composition classes in which exposition and argumentation are stressed. A number of historical and familiar essays also have been included, making the collection available for a more general purpose. Because experience has shown that the students' greatest need is the ability to express their thoughts in clear, coherent form, the emphasis has been placed on essays and articles in which the structure is clearly evident as an aid in effective presentation. Structure, then, has been the guiding principle in making the selections, together with interesting variety of subject matter.

Although most of the material is taken from contemporary writers, enough of the older "classics" (especially in the section of Familiar Essays) has been included to give students a notion of the literary essay at its best. In the groups of expository essays and arguments style has sometimes been sacrificed in order to obtain clear expression and interesting discussion. It is obvious that quite a number of the selections do not conform to a strict definition of the essay. Without drawing fine distinctions among various forms, in the book as a whole an attempt has been made to maintain a balance between literary effectiveness and timely interest of idea.

Because the basis of the choice of models was primarily structure, most of the selections are subject to analysis and discussion as examples of various types of formal presentation. The essays exemplify different degrees of formality and of analytical difficulty, from easy to hard, they may readily be classified by the instructor in a scale suited to students of growing experience and mental capacity.

The topic, paragraph, and sentence outlines of one of the most definitely structural essays are intended to serve as models indicating the relation between thought structure and finished form. These outlines are by no means the only possible meth-

ods of analyzing the essay They represent one standard plan, upon which the instructor may build, or which he may alter, from various points of view

The subjects of the formal essays are grouped in fields of literature, sociology, science, contemporary thought, and college life In the familiar group the arrangement is chronological Essays of Montaigne and Bacon are included because students have often shown an interest in the beginnings of the modern essay In the group of arguments, all but the first and last selections are paired It is obvious, of course, that these arguments (except the "debate" on capitalism) were not written with the intention of being paired in this manner The grouping is, perhaps, unfair to the authors But though the points at issue sometimes do not clash, in choosing the selections, an attempt has been made to adjust the weight of argument evenly

As far as possible, the original spelling and punctuation of the author have been retained The essays will, therefore, show inconsistencies among themselves in these details

It is hoped the collection will serve the purpose for which it was compiled to provide a varied and interesting group of structural essays, with some of the best examples of style, ranging from the classic to the timely.

*Los Angeles, 1933.*

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E R C

### *Acknowledgment*

THE editors wish to express their gratitude to the publishers and authors for their permission to reprint the copyrighted essays. Specific acknowledgment is made in each case

## EXPOSITORY ESSAYS



## The Shot of Acestes<sup>1</sup>

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FRED LEWIS PATTEE

Fred Lewis Pattee (1863- ), is an authority on American literature. He received his training at Dartmouth, and was Professor of American Literature at Pennsylvania State College from 1894 to 1928, and is now emeritus professor. He is the author of *The Wine of May and Other Lyrics*, *A History of American Literature*, *Sidelights on American Literature*, and *Tradition and Jazz*, which is the source of the present essay.

I REFER, of course, to the fifth book of the "Æneid" and the famous games at the tomb of Anchises. The races had been "pulled off," the boxing-bout was over, and the archery event was on. There were four entries: Hyrtacus, Mnestheus, Eurytion, and Acestes—I will use only their sweater-numbers. The target was a mast from one of the defeated racing-boats or a fluttering dove tied to the masthead, the shooters could take their choice. The distance was not mentioned, but it was deemed ample. Admiral Æneas was sole judge and referee and distributor of prizes.

The shooting which followed was sensational. It was more it was unique, for each of the contestants established a new record. No. 1, selecting the mast for his target, clove to a hair the very heart of it and instantly *ingenti sonuerunt omnia plausu*, or, translated into current United States, "the Teucric bleachers arose as one man and gave him the yell." A bull's-eye through the dead center—even the Sicilian townies could feel that. According to Vergil's record, No. 1 alone of all the four

<sup>1</sup> From *Tradition and Jazz*, by Fred Lewis Pattee, copyright, 1925, by The Century Company. Reprinted by permission.

that day captured the crowd to the extent of a yell No 2 chose perforce the dove, but he would not kill the bird, he would not do a thing so ordinary as to shoot a tied dove He aimed at the all but invisible string that bound the bird, and he cut it clean, freeing the captive, which instantly bounded into the sky The bleachers sat in breathless silence and watched the joyous creature reveling in its new freedom Then No 3, holding his arrow on the taut string while he followed the bird in the air, at last let drive and pierced her amid the very clouds Her life she left among the deathless stars, but her lifeless form restored the arrow to its owner's hand Acestes's turn to shoot and no mark All hope of prize-winning gone, he felt free to cut loose and shoot not for the crowd, but for the gods who ruled his soul Lifting his eyes from the solid mast and from the mast-top, even from the low-lying cloud where had perished the dove, he drew his arrow to the head and did a thing no archer had ever dreamed of before he launched his shaft with mighty arm straight into the Olympian blue where dwell the gods And then—I'll leave the rich Latin, which no generation before mine would have insulted its readers by translating—the arrow, speeding swift among the thin clouds, burst into flame and, like a star unloosed from heaven, left behind it a long train of light

The Trojan crowd, unable to fathom an unprecedented thing like that, sat in stolid silence awaiting the verdict of Æneas They had not long to wait To Acestes instantly he awarded first prize As it runs in the swift Latin hexameters, he loaded the man with great gifts, and his temples he bound with the laurel of victors To No 3 he awarded the second prize, for had he not brought down the loosened dove from the lofty sky? To No 2 went third honors, for by his skill had he not cut the bonds that held the winged one to earth? But to No 1, the darling of the bleachers, the one of them all who had felt most certain of the rich prize, to him he gave no award at all, only bare mention that he also had shot, for what



had he done but make a mere bull's-eye on the earth-rooted target?

## II

Whether Vergil intended it or not, the thing is a parable. It rings true: it actually happened, it is happening every day. It clears one's thinking, it sets up standards of measurement among men: four attitudes toward life, in every contest four types of shooters, for critics four rules for determining values. Let us apply them to the modern novel, the worst tangle in modern literature.

Hyrtacus shoots always first, eternally he stands for the younger generation, eternally he opens the tournament, the new literary period—for "literary period" is always synonymous with "generation." He is the loudest of all the shooters, he is young, he is confident: cocksureness sits on him like a chip on a shoulder. Eternally he cries that the old is outgrown, rule-bound, moribund, that manner and manners have obscured the Truth, that he stands for Nature, NATURE! Young Alexander Pope cried aloud for "Nature" before Wordsworth was born. Hyrtacus stands on the solid earth and shoots at the solid mast—"Main Street," "Winesburg, Ohio," "Sister Carrie." He looks not up into the heavens: his business is with Life, the solid earth, the mainmast.

His slogan varies in form with every generation, with every decade even, but it never changes its substance. In the eighteenth century it was "realism," the realism of James and Howells—parlor realism, in the nineties it was "veritism," then "naturalism." There was young Frank Norris: "By God, I told them the Truth!" I hit the solid mast, I pierced the very heart of it. There was young Hamlin Garland: "I believe in the mighty pivotal present. I believe in the living and not the dead. Veritism deals with life face to face." And there was Eugène Véron, whom he quoted: "We care no longer for gods or heroes. we care for men." And behind them all Zola. Skip

three decades Dreiser, Lawrence, Sherwood Anderson—super-realism, stark-nakedism Pick one at random to voice this new school of archery—Walter B Pitkin, short-story coach, revamper of handbooks for correspondence courses, assembler of "As We Are," 1923 Read his entire preface, this is a fragment

"It is partly a matter of scientific progress and partly one of intelligence level Men read and write realism with a steadily growing passion as a consequence of the swiftly widening and deepening culture of this century The man who has been touched with the spirit of science puts little trust in his so-called 'intuitions' He suspects those moods which the poet calls 'deep spiritual insights' In a word, he is a realist as every scientist must be, whether he knows it or not Ours is the first generation in which there has lived more than a handful of realistically minded men and women Our popular magazines are responding to a firm demand for realism by printing stories which tell the truth and shame the devil as well as horrify the herd . Our better magazines furnish realism in proportion to the numerical power of highly intelligent readers among their *clientèle* So much for the general trend"

Thereupon he exemplifies "realism" by a series of tales so deadly faithful to the immediate contacts of life that some he declares are not fiction at all, but genuine biography, actual studies in actual back alleys, true to the minutest detail He has held a clinic, he has made a dissection You do not like such ghastly revelations? "Then we must debate this with you on the spot" You are belated in the march of evolution toward civilization, you are confessing your "lowbrowness", the race evolves upward into realism "If you want the proof of this, look at the history of our great literary successes"

I pick up a more recent book, "Midwest Portraits," studies in recent Chicago archery, "literature" as up to date as a city reporter's note-book Everywhere life viewed objectively and microscopically Every author of them a tireless worker in

contemporaneousness, every one of them self-hypnotized in umbilical contemplation, obsessed with the immediate contacts of life—shooters at the mast To a man they have been trained in the school of metropolitan journalism—superficiality, head-long impressionism No perspective, no poise, no serenity of soul, no sky lights, no silences In the words of the author himself “In nearly all of them a realistic or naturalistic method predominates The city, dealing with the elementals of our lives, inspires men to a realistic mood” Here is the list of our latter-day classics as crowned by Chicago journalism

“Theodore Dreiser in ‘Sister Carrie’ and ‘The Financier,’ Robert Herrick in ‘The Webb,’ ‘The Common Lot,’ and ‘The Memoirs of an American Citizen,’ Edgar Lee Masters in ‘Children of the Market Place’ and ‘Skeeters Kirby,’ Henry Kitchell Webster in ‘An American Family,’ Joseph Medill Patterson in ‘Rebellion’ and ‘A Little Brother of the Rich,’ Sherwood Anderson in ‘Marching Men’ and ‘Winesburg, Ohio,’ Ben Hecht in ‘Erik Dorn,’ I K Friedman in ‘By Bread Alone,’ Hamlin Garland in ‘Rose of Dutcher’s Coolly’ and ‘A Daughter of the Middle Border,’ and Frank Norris in ‘The Pit’”

I laid down the book, with its level atmosphere of contempt for “the old household gods whose engraved portraits hang on schoolhouse walls,” its hydrophobic rage at the bare mention of “Puritanism,” always made synonymous with “Comstockery” and “cant,” its youthful cocksureness, and its inference on every page that now for the first time in all history a group of young men had arisen that was telling the truth about human life, the TRUTH!—I laid it down in the mood, I fancy, of the Man of Wrath in “Elizabeth and her German Garden”

“I very much like to hear you talk together It is all so young and fresh what you think and what you believe, and not of the least consequence to any one”

Then suddenly a phrase on the jacket caught my eye and I got a thrill such as nothing in all the many chapters of the

book had given me, a shock as from a live spark-plug "These are figures of importance to their own generation" Their own generation thinks these writings are literature, the outpourings of these Chicago candidates for the booby prize their own generation thinks are literature! What does it matter what my generation—the generation passing from the stage—thinks of these things? my generation does not own the next period, and these young men do Can it be possible that a period is coming in the history of literature when the shot of Hyrtacus is to win the tournament? God help us!

### III

A tribe larger than that of Hyrtacus, though less noisy and far less cocksure, traces descent back to Mnestheus, No 2 in the ancient contest Sensation—to cut the unseen string and send the bird bounding into the sky—what a moment of thrill! Mnestheus shot only to capture the multitude and the prize Always has there been sensationalism in the literary output of the world Readers demand first of all newness, freshness, originality To capture the multitude one must bring things new A wild bit of newness like "The Castle of Otranto" has even created a new school of fiction Sensation made a millionaire of Robert Bonner, editor of the "New York Ledger," its star contributor Sylvanus Cobb Sensation is the soul of the modern detective story, of the "dime novel" and the "shilling shocker," of the O Henry surprise ending, and of the noiseless clamor of the moving film Mnestheus sits on every news-stand of today and at the gate of every moving-picture house, and puts upon all he touches the brand of third rate

But there was a second element in the shot of Mnestheus—sensation, the god of instants, is prolonged often into sentimentality Sentiment—the wingèd thing helplessly fettered to earth set free, cast unharmed into the heavens, its element—what a stroke at the sensibilities! The arrow was kind, it was aimed not to kill, but to free Sentimentality comes from self-

pity, it comes from imagination which looks at the butterfly, winged for the heavens, sinking deeper in the mud with every stroke of its beautiful wings, and sees itself, it comes from conviction innate in some men, if not in all, that the great average of men is fundamentally good even as one believes oneself to be good. And the crowd forever delights to sit and watch the joy of the winged thing restored to its native sky, and sometimes, while watching absorbedly this creature of the skies buffeting the winds and surmounting the utmost cloud, it even forgets for a time that its own feet are on the muddy earth.

And sentimentality is weakness: it is rooted in selfishness. Mnestheus did not free the dove out of pity, but out of selfish desire. To rescue a starving kitten from a pit may be purest selfishness. "I couldn't sleep a wink tonight if I didn't." I wonder if the sentimentalism of the early nineteenth century did not prepare Germany for the debacle of the early twentieth. For sentimentality is selfishness, and selfishness is the very fountainhead of ambition and of cruelty.

I said sentimentality is weakness. I was reading lately Charles Godfrey Leland, a prophet of the mid-century, at present obscured almost totally by the underbrush. A Book may be inexpressibly touching, he declared, it may be sunny and ingenuous and yet be unhealthy.

"Would you test what I have said? Read Sterne for an hour, and then take up some true old Roman or Greek poet who knew nothing of these latter-day sentimentalisms and fancies of feeling. How the wild boar's sides brush the dew from the leafy covert, how the violets spring freshly up to meet the sunlight on the mountain side, how the well-decked skiffs ride over the foam, while sea-nymphs look up through the blue waves. Ay, how flamens and lictors and solemn processions sweep through the columned streets of Rome, how the horses, with towering necks and slender legs, 'haggard-browed, wide-mouthed, wide-nostrilled,' champ and foam, how the girl Erotion peers from the window at the sight

'Her locks are tipped with ruddy gold  
Like wool that clothes the Bacchic fold,  
Like braided hair of girls of Rhine' "

There is nothing that more irritates the vast tribe of Hyrtacians than this shot of Mnestheus. What chance does realism have, however skilful, in the presence of this stirring exhibition? And they jeer with scorn that reveals the poverty of our language in really withering adjectives "Pollyannaism!" "Dicky Davisism!" "Peruna!" they shout "Syrupy treacle! Victorian gelatinousness!"—but I forbear. Their tribe is nothing new—even Mercken. At the very height of Victorian properness the English "Frazer's Magazine" could let out on Fenimore Cooper with, "He's a liar, a bilious braggart, a full jackass, an insect, a grub, and a reptile."

But when they condemn Mnestheus I am of the tribe of Hyrtacus both as touching the first fruit of his shot, sensation, and the second fruit of it as well—sentimentality. Of all debauchery that of emotion uncoupled with attendant action is the most deadening to the soul of man. William James in his "Psychology" has written most illumingly on the point. We remember his aristocrat who wept in the theater over the imaginary woes of the heroine while her own coachman was slowly freezing outside. And sensationalism—the freeing of the bird simply for the momentary thrill of it, again and yet again—is hardly less debauching. Go to the movies and look not at the screen but at the people. Purposeless watching for the cut string and the suddenly bounding bird, weltering in a smother of sentiment and leaving the dishes unwashed at home—castles in the air with no foundations at all upon the earth—continue it long and your soul, if you still have a soul, withers and dies.

But always Mnestheus wins over Hyrtacus. He caught at least a glimpse of the divine blue, he saw for a moment at least the loosened dove of man's soul mounting into the upper air, and for a moment at least he felt the freedom of the gods—he was himself a god, with all the boundless sky as his demesne.

IV

The tribe of Eurytion is dubbed by D H Lawrence in his amazing book, "Classical American Literature," the "killers" With no thought of alluding to Vergil's parable, he has this of James Fenimore Cooper

"This is Natty, the white forerunner A killer As in 'Deer-slayer,' he shoots the bird that flies in the high, high sky, so that the bird falls out of the invisible into the visible, dead, he symbolizes himself He will bring the bird of the spirit out of the high air He is the stoic killer of the old great life"

Good! It is a shot of Eurytion Bliss Perry, also with no thought of his Vergil, has voiced the same thought

"Flaubert once compared our human idealism to the flight of a swallow, at one moment it is soaring towards the sunset, at the next moment some one shoots it and it tumbles into the mud with blood upon its glistening wings The sudden poignant contrast between light, space, freedom, and the wounded, bleeding bird in the mud is the very essence of tragedy"

There is "Don Quixote" Once men dreamed honestly of chivalry and tried to practise it and the whole race took a step in advance, then Cervantes shot the bird down into the barn-yard mud and we laugh and jeer "No, no," you protest, "Cervantes shot only at the unspeakable nonsense into which the books of chivalry had degenerated, that nauseating mess of silly romances he so carefully enumerates He did the race a benefit His was a shot of Acestes" Not at all, and in saying it I am aware of the vast bulwarks of introduction and explanation and critical exegesis that have been thrown up around the volume by the commentations and critics of centuries I will quote as typical Dr John Ormsby

"Of all the absurdities that, thanks to poetry, will be repeated to the end of time, there is no greater one than saying that 'Cervantes smiled Spain's chivalry away' In the first place there was no chivalry for him to smile away Spain's chivalry

had been dead for a century What he did smile away was not chivalry but a degrading mockery of it "

But nevertheless the book falls inevitably into second place it is a shot of Eurytion The weakness of it lies in this the old knight, unpractical to silliness, deluded, driven even to lunacy by the chaos of his reading, was nevertheless sincere He set out in all honesty to be helpful to his fellow-men He believed with his whole noble soul that he was righting wrongs, he had started out with purpose as serious as did any knight in the most golden age of chivalry And he is made at every step a subject for hilarious laughter Call him a fool, call him crazed by his reading, and laugh till your sides are sore over the hideous pummelings he received, but remember you are laughing at the overthrow of one who had ideals supremely above those of the Sancho Panza average of mankind, you are laughing at the defeat of all that is most precious in the sorry outfit of humanity You are laughing at the defeat of your own soul The old knight sees for instance a brute of a master beating to death his awkward servant, and, attempting, as any knightly soul would do, to rescue the victim, he is maimed and left half dead while the brutal master continues to finish to his satisfaction the job that has been interrupted And Spain for centuries has laughed uproariously over the joke May it not explain why Spain in three centuries since has produced scarcely one great book? Sancho Panza whose coarse feet are always flat upon the muddy earth is the real hero of "Don Quixote" He stands for common sense keep your eye on your hogs, not on the sky And Don Quixote, who, however crazily and by whatever crazed, had a vision of idealism, of life above the clod, and who without a thought of his own peril or his own sufferings plunged into the combat for what he believed to be for the helpfulness of his fellow-men, has been made the butt for the laughter of three centuries "Don Quixote" has cheapened all that is best in humanity, for it has been read invariably for the laughter there is in it, the most of it at the expense of the simple old knight.



There have been plenty to follow in the footsteps of Cervantes his book has been a model ever since Satire is not always an inferior thing There are abuses that will yield to no other weapon Thackeray in "Vanity Fair" did not belittle human life he belittled the English social conventions of a period Swift, on the contrary, shot all the doves out of the human sky and left but the filthy Yahoo, compared with whom a horse is an angel of light The apostle of disillusionment may have a message that to a degree is wholesome and necessary, but when he sets no limit to disillusion and takes from man all that has raised him in any way from the sty, he has become a menace to the race

The past half-century has been peculiarly equipped with Eurytions, who seem to have had a kind of joy in shooting down everything that man has held peculiarly sacred Could the Resurrection story of the New Testament be clearly proved by some new-found document or other to be absolutely false, there are those who would actually rejoice—George Moore, perhaps, whose "The Brook Kerith" was a shot to make the Christian world shudder Anatole France in "L'île des Penguins" shoots down the old great life of France and sneers and jeers at the dead bird, and they give him the Nobel Prize for his marksmanship The human soul takes as naturally to the upper air as the wingèd dove, it is incurably romantic and idealistic, and a Eurytion stands on every street-corner shooting at it as if it were an obscene bird The American Mark Twain writes "Innocents Abroad" and shoots all the glory out of the romantic sky of the grand tour of Europe His characters are "innocents" because they have been imposed upon they thought there had been an old great life in Europe He sends a Connecticut Yankee into King Arthur's court and we classify his book as humor It belongs with the tragedies He catches a glimpse of the old great life of the passing American frontier—romance with the golden light upon it, a glimpse he gets of the marvelous romance of Dom-

remy and its peasant saint, and he dies growling curses on "the damned human race" America has produced no somberer tragedian The Puritan tradition deals with one of the loftiest flights of the Anglo-Saxon soul, and no young archer today with arrow so blunt that he cannot bring it down into the mud The typical Eurytion of the younger generation let us call James Cabell life is tragedy, a glimpse of heaven and then a nose-dive into the dunghill dead He writes the "comedy of disenchantment" let us rather call it tragedy, the supremest tragedy man knows I mean Cabell is the tragedy The man who sees no gods above his clouds is dead and in hell Prometheus brought down from the Olympic zone fire for the blessing of mortals, Mnestheus also brought down a heavenly thing, but he brought it down dead—not fire, but ashes—and, having delivered the monstrous gift, he stands and sneers "These are your gods, O Israel Life is a monstrous joke look at these dead ashes!"

Yet Eurytion is more deserving of the prize than Hyrtacus he at least, if only for a moment, has looked higher than the muddy earth, he is more deserving than Mnestheus, for he did not stand impotently and dream of the skies He brought down something out of the unseen, even though he brought it dead

## V

And now Acestes His tribe is almost as small as that of the Mohicans Novelists rarely have taken possession of domains so immaterial as those the imagination of Acestes bodied forth These realms have most fully been explored by the poets For one like Longfellow Acestes would inevitably be a poet

Where are the Poets, unto whom belong  
The Olympian heights, whose singing shafts were sent  
Straight to the mark, and not from bows half bent,  
But with the utmost tension of the thong?

To him the literary master was the explorer of new seas, the extender of the domains of the human soul His cry was for

a master of the art,  
An admiral sailing the high seas of thought  
Fearless and first, and steering with his fleet  
For lands not yet laid down on any chart

According to Poe, "The origin of poetry lies in a thirst for a wider Beauty than earth supplies Poetry itself is the imperfect effort to quench this immortal thirst by novel combinations of beautiful forms (collocations of forms) physical or spiritual, and that this thirst when even partially allayed—this sentiment when even feebly meeting response—produces emotions to which all other human emotions are vapid and insignificant" To Poe this master of highest emotion, this Acestes, content only with contacts in the realms of gold, must be a creator, an idealist, a man of two worlds Such masters are few in selecting them he laid bare his own soul

For one Fouqué there are fifty Molières For one Angelo  
there are five hundred Jan Steens For one Dickens there  
are five million Smolletts, Fieldings, Marryats, Arthurs,  
Cocktons, Bogtons and Frogtons

Even one Acestes in a generation makes a people rich America in her single literary century has had very few novelists who have ventured the supreme shot Hawthorne has come the nearest to it No man ever more fully paid the price of genius than he For years he lived not on the solid earth, but in the upper air with his dreams For a full quarter of his life he lived a hermit Never once did he write *down* to the multitude, though not to do so made him even in his middle years "the obscurest man of letters in America" And his "Scarlet Letter" was aimed wholly at the dictate of his own soul We who read it today against the background of our modern life cannot realize what a shot of Acestes this was when it was first launched in puritanical mid-Victorian New

England To realize the full meaning of it one must project it against the background of the Boston of 1850 Cooper once or twice came near making the shot, but American democracy overwhelmed him and swallowed him up A few other novelists there may have been, like Melville, who have caught glimpses of the Olympian summits but whose arms have been too weak to complete the shot Others, not novelists, have been our Acestes shooters, alas too few Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman

It is the gift of the supreme literary soul to see beyond eyesight, to bring the fire of the gods down alive Standing with Acestes and looking into the invisible blue, one begins to understand many hard sayings of the philosophers We catch a glimpse of what Melville meant when speaking of Hawthorne "Irving is a grasshopper to him—putting the souls of the two men together" Irving was of the tribe of Mnesteus We jeer no longer at Barrett Wendell's Harvard dictums "The writings of Irving, of Cooper, of Bryant never dealt with deeply significant matters," and, "In the work of Poe nothing was produced that touched seriously on God's eternities" And we understand Thoreau even in such Orphic sayings as "We should see that our dreams are the solidest facts that we know," and, "My actual life is a fact, in view of which I have no occasion to congratulate myself, but for my faith and aspiration I have respect"

Great literature is always an arrow launched into the blue by an archer who sought no prize save that furnished by his own soul, who followed no precedents, but who shot to bring down alive the unseen powers, call them gods or call them what you will Novalis sought the blue flower, Maeterlinck, the blue bird, and they sought it not in the mud of the swamps Thoreau had lost among other things a dove with wings His dream was "to discover the sources of the Nile, perchance the Mountains of the Moon" Never was he a naturalist rather was he a supernaturalist

Always somewhere in the great classic comes the stage-

direction, often implied, "Enter the gods" The arrow kindles in the sky and becomes a trail of light for generations to come Melville wrote "Moby Dick" to suit his own imperious soul, and two generations later its trail was burning brighter than when he first shot it Whitman, not the earlier poet of the body but the later voice of the soul, created his splendid "Passage to India" out of his own life without models and without expectation of reward or recognition Thoreau for years wrote his journal daily for himself and the gods He had no thought of publication Emerson's most quoted line is "hitch your wagon to a star," and he holds the commanding place that he does today simply because his whole life long he tried for himself to make this celestial connection

There are those who fear that Acestes is dead and that in America at least he has left no descendants After reading a book like "Midwest Portraits" one is inclined to agree with them But if Acestes is dead then is the soul of America dead Inconceivable! The Cabells and the Andersons and the Dreisers and the Menckens rule the moment by their clatter and their cocksureness, but their day is brief A donkey braying in the back lot may drown for me the music of the spheres—if I will let it These creatures of the moment have as little power to realize the possibilities and the harmonies and the wingèd powers of the human soul, its ability to triumph over the merely physical, compelling as the physical unquestionably is, as they have to wear the shoes of St Francis They see but the mud and they bathe in the mud and they cry to the world "Come on in, the mud is fine Everybody's in it Look, here is a sample of it, warranted genuine You can't stay out anyway, even if you want to" But Acestes looks away from the mud and talks of the glory of man His eyes are upon the gods beyond the clouds, and when he shoots, his mighty arrow becomes a burning pathway across the heavens lighting the race in its groping progress upwards toward the stars

## Why We Read<sup>1</sup>

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JAY BROADUS HUBBELL

Jay Broadus Hubbell (1885- ) has taught English and American literature at a number of colleges and universities. He has been, since 1927, professor of English at Duke University. He has edited modern editions of literature and has written texts and essays in appreciation and criticism. The essay below was taken from *The Enjoyment of Literature* (1930).

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Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability.  
Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider.

Francis Bacon *Of Studies*

Literature is the effort of man to indemnify himself for the wrongs of his condition.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

WHY do men and women read books? Have you ever noticed how various are the motives which turn us to books? Some of us read merely to pass the time away, or to save ourselves from boredom, some read in order to find something to talk about, others wish to impress somebody, or are afraid of being considered uninformed, some read from habit. One man may read in order to learn more about life, another for ideas, and still another for emotional stimulation. An occasional student reads because he wishes to learn to use the language more correctly and fluently.

These are the more common motives. Which of them

<sup>1</sup> From Jay B. Hubbell, *The Enjoyment of Literature*. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

move you—the better or the worse? Let us examine a little more carefully four or five of these motives. It is these incentives to reading that literature must satisfy, and we shall understand better the nature of this great art after a brief analysis

#### LITERATURE OFFERS A WAY OF ESCAPE

With many readers of a romantic bent—and with all of us in certain moods—literature offers a way of escape from unpleasant realities. When we are weary of the Here and the Now, we like to dream of the far-off in space or in time. In this mood there is no resource like a book, or, as Emily Dickinson has phrased it,

There is no frigate like a book,  
To take us lands away,  
Nor any coursers like a page  
Of prancing poetry

In his fascinating narrative, *Revolt in the Desert*, Colonel Thomas E. Lawrence mentions an experience which he had in a winter-bound Arabian village during the World War. "We were twenty-eight in the two tiny rooms, which reeked with the sour smell of our crowd. In my saddle-bags was a [copy of Malory's] *Morte d'Arthur*. It relieved my disgust. The men had only physical resources, and in the confined misery their tempers roughened." Those who have never discovered the resource of reading go to the movies or turn to idle day-dreaming. The best refuge is a romance. "Fiction," says Robert Louis Stevenson, in "A Gossip on Romance," "is to the grown man what play is to the child." "The great creative writer," he continues, "shows us the realization and the apotheosis of the day-dreams of common men. His stories may be nourished with the realities of life, but their true mark is to satisfy the nameless longings of the reader, and to obey the ideal laws of the day-dream." For men so fortunate as to have preserved something of the eternal boy, there are no romances more satisfy-

ing than Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, *David Balfour*, and *Treasure Island*

LITERATURE MAY EXTEND ONE'S EXPERIENCE

In an unromantic, or realistic, mood we read not to escape life but to learn more about it and to extend our limited experience of it. A novel by Thackeray or Balzac or a good biography gives one a feeling of reality, of aliveness. We feel that what we are reading, even if it is unpleasant, must nevertheless be true. Paradoxically, art can give us pleasure even when it deals with what is drab and commonplace. Even the ugly and the tragic may become absorbingly interesting. A part of our pleasure comes from our recognizing the truthfulness of the portrait, but much of it is due also to the author's ability to see more in life than we have seen. In Browning's poem the painter, Fra Lippo Lippi, explains why we like to see everyday life mirrored by the artist:

For, don't you mark? We're made so that we love  
First when we see them painted, things we have passed  
Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see,  
And so they are better, painted—better to us,  
Which is the same thing. Art was given for that

Literature, when supplemented by intelligent observation, can teach us much about human nature. The number of interesting people whom most of us know is quite limited. Literature offers us a means of extending our experience almost indefinitely. Biography and history can bring back the great men of the past—Johnson, Napoleon, Lincoln, Franklin. Individuals whom in actual life we should avoid may become extraordinarily interesting in the pages of a novel or upon the stage. In real life few of us have known such men and women as Huckleberry Finn, Uncle Remus, Falstaff, Hamlet, Becky Sharp, Jeanie Deans, Sam Weller, Eustacia Vye, Tartuffe, Jean Valjean, or Silas Lapham.

\* Not only may literature extend enormously the range of



our experience, it can also greatly widen the bounds of our sympathies. One cannot read Tolstoy's *War and Peace* or *Anna Karénina* and still feel that all Russians are half-savage revolutionists, nor Hamlin Garland's *Main Travelled Roads* and think of all farmers as "rubes" and "hicks." Literature can help us to escape the narrowing influences of our own nation, race, religion, social class, profession, our years, our temperament, the age in which we live. If our reading does not make us wiser, more tolerant, and more sympathetic, it has failed in one of its chief aims.

Literature is not a substitute for living, it is a way of living—a means of widening and intensifying one's life. When we have read a play by Shakespeare or a novel by Thackeray, we ought for days afterwards to be able to see the world and its people through the far-seeing eyes of the poet or the novelist. After reading the poems of Burns or Wordsworth, one ought to be able to find unsuspected beauty in a Texas prairie, a Carolina cotton field, or a back street in any town or city. If one knows how to read, the accomplishment places the reader temporarily on a footing of something like equality with the masters. "We are all poets," said Carlyle. "when we *read* a poem well."

#### LITERATURE AND CONDUCT

If literature is a criticism, or interpretation, of life, as Matthew Arnold taught, it should have a definite relation to the problem of how to live rightly. Literature must not be didactic, however, or it will defeat its purpose. Preaching is not a function of literature, especially of poetry. "Literature does not argue," said Cardinal Newman, "it declaims and insinuates, it is multiform and versatile, it persuades instead of convincing, it seduces, it carries captive, it appeals to the sense of honor, or to the imagination, or to the stimulus of curiosity, it makes its way by means of gaiety, satire, romance, the beautiful, the pleasurable."

There is a certain type of fiction which tends to relax

the fibers of the will if it is read too exclusively Plato banished certain types of poetry from his ideal republic because they appealed to the emotions rather than to the will or the reason "The best romance," said Ruskin, "becomes dangerous, if, by its excitement, it renders the ordinary course of life uninteresting, and increases the morbid thirst for useless acquaintance with scenes in which we shall never be called upon to act" An American novelist, William Dean Howells, has condemned this type of fiction as severely as any moralist

If a novel flatters the passions, and exalts them above the principles, it is poisonous, it may not kill, but it will certainly injure, and this test will alone exclude an entire class of fiction, of which eminent examples will occur to all Then the whole spawn of so-called unmoral romances [this is a hit at Stevenson], which imagine a world where the sins of sense are unvisited by the penalties following, swift or slow, but inexorably sure, in the real world, are deadly poison these do kill The novels that merely tickle our prejudices and lull our judgment, or that coddle our sensibilities or pamper our gross appetite for the marvellous are not so fatal, but they are innutritious, and clog the soul with unwholesome vapors of all kinds No doubt they too help to weaken the moral fibre, and make their readers indifferent to "plodding perseverance and plain industry," and to "matter-of-fact poverty and commonplace distress"

No one should limit his reading to a single type, least of all to romantic or sensational fiction One will do well to read more often the great realistic novels, the tragedies of Shakespeare, and the essays of the ethical stimulators, Marcus Aurelius, Emerson, and Carlyle The great poets sometimes assume the prophet's mantle They quicken our sympathy with the right, our scorn for the wrong Contact with a great and noble personality, like that of Milton or Dante, makes one a better man or woman And yet the aims of literature are so various that one cannot agree with Emerson that its one aim is "to inspire" The great writer reveals to us life in all its

beauty and sadness and complexity as he sees it, but he rarely regards it necessary to attach a moral, which only the stupid would fail to see anyway

#### BEAUTY OF FORM

Thus far we have considered only the content, or subject matter, of literature, but a large part of our pleasure in reading a story or a poem is due to its formal, or technical, qualities. Few, to be sure, read a story or a poem purely for its structure or its style, and yet who cares to read a poorly written story, no matter what its content may be? Far more of the reader's pleasure comes from form than he usually suspects. Stevenson goes so far as to say, "There is, indeed, only one merit worth considering in a man of letters—that he should write well, and only one damning fault—that he should write ill." In some writers, like Poe and O. Henry, the content is slight, in others, like Tennyson and Longfellow, it is somewhat commonplace. But there is a pleasure in finding even a platitude well expressed. What is there of originality or freshness about the thoughts expressed in Gray's famous "Elegy"? Practically nothing, and yet we all like it because we find here, in Pope's phrase, "What oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed."

#### LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

The study of literature has an incidental but very practical value for the person who wishes to improve his writing or conversation. Any teacher of English composition will tell you that almost invariably his best students have acquired, usually at home, the habit of reading good books. Students who come from homes where there are few books rarely write easily or correctly. Reading gives one a wider vocabulary and cultivates a feeling for the finer shades of meaning in words. To profit fully, however, one must work systematically. Reading, conversation, and writing should all find a place on one's program. There is much wisdom in Francis Bacon's famous

sentence, "Reading maketh a full man, conference [speech, discourse] a ready man, and writing an exact man"

In his autobiography Benjamin Franklin tells us how he improved his writing by a systematic imitation of the *Spectator* papers of Steele and Addison Stevenson, in "A College Magazine," has described his somewhat similar experiences in playing "the sedulous ape" to the authors whom he admired

Whenever I read a book or passage that particularly pleased me, in which a thing was said or an effect rendered with propriety, in which there was either some conspicuous force or some happy distinction in the style, I must sit down at once and set myself to ape that quality I was unsuccessful, and I knew it, and tried again, and was again unsuccessful and always unsuccessful, but at least in these vain bouts, I got some practice in rhythm, in harmony, in construction, and in the co-ordination of parts

#### CONCLUSION

These, then, are the chief motives for the reading of books of permanent value. If your taste is catholic, you will have found that all these functions of literature appeal to you. Do not ignore any one of them. And do not make the mistake of reading a book in a spirit alien to that in which it was written. To get the best out of any book, one must read it sympathetically.

Finally, do not forget that into the making of a great book go years of thought and of living, sometimes of tragic experience, and months and months of painstaking writing and revision. "For books," as John Milton well said, "are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul whose progeny they are, nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. . . a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life." Of his

book, says Ruskin, an author would say "This is the best of me, for the rest, I ate, and drank, and slept, loved, and hated, like another, my life was as the vapour, and is not, but this I saw and knew this, if anything of mine, is worth your memory"

# The Enjoyment of Poetry<sup>1</sup>

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SAMUEL MCCHORD CROTHERS

Samuel McChord Crothers (1857-1927) was a minister, first of the Presbyterian, later of the Unitarian church, and an essayist on literary and social topics. His work is subtly thoughtful and is couched in half-serious, half-humorous style. The present example is from *The Gentle Reader* (1903). For more extended discussion of the contrast between modern and "old-fashioned" poetry, see the stimulating book by John Livingston Lowes, *Convention and Revolt in Poetry*.

BROWNING's description of the effect of the recital of classic poetry upon a band of piratical Greeks must seem to many persons to be exaggerated.

Then, because Greeks are Greeks, and hearts are hearts,  
And poetry is power, they all outbroke  
In a great joyous laughter with much love

Because Americans are Americans, and business is business, and time is money, and life is earnest, we take our poetry much more seriously than that. We are ready to form classes to study it and to discuss it, but these solemn assemblies are not likely to be disturbed by outbursts of "great joyous laughter."

We usually accept poetry as mental discipline. It is as if the poet said, "Go to, now. I will produce a masterpiece." Thereupon the conscientious reader answers, "Very well, I can stand it. I will apply myself with all diligence, that by means of it I may improve my mind." Who has not sometimes

<sup>1</sup> From *The Gentle Reader*. Used by permission of, and by arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company.

quailed before the long row of British Poets in uniform binding, standing stiffly side by side, like so many British grenadiers on dress parade? Who has not felt his courage ooze away at the sight of those melancholy volumes labeled *Complete Poetical Works*? *Poetical Remains* they used to call them, and there is something funereal in their aspect

The old hymn says, "Religion never was designed to make our pleasures less," and the same thing ought to be said about poetry. The distaste for poetry arises largely from the habit of treating it as if it were only a more difficult kind of prose. We are so much under the tyranny of the scientific method that the habits of the schoolroom intrude, and we try to extract instruction from what was meant to give us joy. The prosaic commentary obscures the beauty of the text, so that

The glad old romance, the gay chivalrous story,  
With its fables of faery, its legends of glory,  
Is turned to a tedious instruction, not new,  
To the children, who read it insipidly through

One of the most ruthless invasions of the prosaic faculties into the realm of poetry comes from the thirst for general information. When this thirst becomes a disease, it is not satisfied with census reports and encyclopædia articles, but values literature according to the number of facts presented. Suppose these lines from "*Paradise Lost*" to be taken for study —

Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks  
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades  
High over-arched embower, or scattered sedge  
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed  
Hath vexed the Red Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew  
Busiris and his Memphian chivalry

What an opportunity this presents to the schoolmaster! "Come now," he cries with pedagogic glee, "answer me a few questions. Where is Vallombrosa? What is the character of its autumnal foliage? Bound Etruria. What is sedge? Explain the

myth of Orion Point out the constellation on the map of the heavens Where is the Red Sea? Who was Busiris? By what other name was he known? Who were the Memphian Chivalry?"

Here is material for exhaustive research in geography, ancient and modern history, botany, astronomy, meteorology, chronology, and archæology The industrious student may get almost as much information out of "Paradise Lost" as from one of those handy compilations of useful knowledge, which are sold on the railway cars for twenty-five cents As for the poetry of Milton, that is another matter

Next to the temptation to use a poem as a receptacle for a mass of collateral information is that to use it for the display of one's own penetration As in the one case it is treated as if it were an encyclopædia article, in the other it is treated as if it were a verbal puzzle It is taken for granted that the intention of the poet is to conceal thought, and the game is for the reader to find it out We are hunting for hidden meanings, and we greet one another with the grim salutation of the creatures in the jungle "Good hunting!" "What is the meaning of this passage?" Who has not heard this sudden question propounded in regard to the most transparent sentence from an author who is deemed worthy of study? The uninitiated, in the simplicity of his heart, might answer that he probably means what he says Not at all, if that were so, "what are we here for?" We are here to find hidden meanings, and one who finds the meaning simple must be stopped, as Armado stops Moth, with

Define, define, well-educated infant

It is a verbal masquerade to which we have been invited No knowing what princes in disguise, as well as anarchists and nihilists and other objectionably interesting persons, may be discovered when the time for unmasking comes

Now, the effect of all this is that many persons turn away from the poets altogether Why should they spend valuable



time in trying to unravel the meaning of lines which were invented to baffle them? There are plenty of things we do not understand, without going out of our way to find them. Then, as Pope observes,

True No-meaning puzzles more than Wit

The poets themselves, as if conscious that they are objects of suspicion, are inclined to be apologetic, and endeavor to show that they are doing business on a sound prosaic basis. Wordsworth set the example of such painstaking self-justification. His conscience compelled him to make amends to the literal-minded Public for poetic indiscretions, and to offer to settle all claims for damages. What a shame-faced excuse he makes for the noble lines on Rob Roy's grave. "I have since been told that I was misinformed as to the burial-place of Rob Roy, if so, I may plead in excuse that I wrote on apparently good authority, namely that of a well-educated lady who lived at the head of the lake."

One is reminded of the preface to the works of *The Sweet Singer of Michigan*. "This little book is composed of truthful pieces. All those which speak of being killed, died, or drowned are truthful songs, others are more truth than poetry."

It is against this mistaken conscientiousness that the Gentle Reader protests. He insists that the true "defense of poesy" is that it has an altogether different function from prose. It is not to be appreciated by the prosaic understanding, unless, indeed, that awkward faculty be treated to some Delsartean decomposing exercises to get rid of its stiffness.

"When I want more truth than poetry," he says, "I will go directly to *The Sweet Singer of Michigan*, or I will inquire of the well-educated lady who lives at the head of the lake. I do not like to have a poet troubled about such small matters."

Then he reads with approval the remarks of one of his own order who lived in the seventeenth century, who protests against those "who take away the liberty of a poet and fetter his feet in the shackles of an historian. For why should a poet

doubt in story to mend the intrigues of fortune by more delightful conveyances of probable fictions because austere historians have entered into bond to truth, an obligation which were in poets as foolish and unnecessary as is the bondage of false martyrs, who lie in chains for a mistaken opinion But by this I would imply that truth, narrative and past, is the idol of historians (who worship a dead thing), and truth operative and by effects continually alive is the mistress of poets, who hath not her existence in matter but in reason "

I am well aware that the attitude of the Gentle Reader seems to many strenuous persons to be unworthy of our industrial civilization These persons insist that we shall make hard work of our poetry, if for no other reason than to preserve our self-respect Here as elsewhere they insist upon the stern law that if a man will not labor neither shall he eat Even the poems of an earlier and simpler age which any child can understand must be invested with some artificial difficulty The learned guardians of these treasures insist that they cannot be appreciated unless there has been much preliminary wrestling with a "critical apparatus," and much delving among "original sources" This is the same principle that makes the prudent householder provide a sharp saw and a sufficient pile of cord wood as a test to be applied to the stranger who asks for a breakfast There is much academic disapproval of one who in defiance of all law insists on enjoying poetry after his own "undressed, unpolished, uneducated, unpruned, untrained, or rather unlettered, or ratherest unconfirmed fashion" I, however, so thoroughly sympathize with the Gentle Reader that I desire to present his point of view

To understand poetry is a vain ambition That which we fully understand is the part that is *not* poetry It is that which passes our understanding which has the secret in itself There is an incommunicable grace that defies all attempts at analysis Poetry is like music, it is fitted, not to define an idea or to describe a fact, but to voice a mood. The mood may be the mood of a very simple person,—the mood of a shepherd watch-

ing his flocks, or of a peasant in the fields, or, on the other hand, it may be the mood of a philosopher whose mind has been engrossed with the most subtle problems of existence. But in each case the mood, by some suggestion, must be communicated to us. Thoughts and facts must be transfigured, they must come to us as through some finer medium. As we are told that we must experience religion before we know what religion is, so we must experience poetry. The poet is the enchanter, and we are the willing victims of his spells —

Would'st thou see  
A man i' th' clouds and hear him speak to thee?  
Would'st thou be in a dream and yet not sleep?  
Or would'st thou in a moment laugh and weep?  
Wouldest thou lose thyself and catch no harm?  
And find thyself again without a charm?

. . . . .

O then come hither  
And lay my book, thy head and heart together.

Only the reader who yields to the charm can dream the dream. The poet may weave his story of the most common stuff, but "there's magic in the web of it." If we are conscious of this magical power, we forgive the lack of everything else. The poet may be as ignorant as Aladdin himself, but he has a strange power over our imaginations. At his word they obey, traversing continents, building palaces, painting pictures. They say, "We are ready to obey as thy slaves, and the slaves of all that have that lamp in their hands,—we and the other slaves of the lamp."

This is the characteristic of the poet's power. He does not construct a work of the imagination,—he makes our imaginations do that. That is why the fine passages of elaborate description in verse are usually failures. The verse-maker describes accurately and at length. The poet speaks a word, and *Presto!* change! We are transported into a new land, and our eyes are "baptized into the grace and privilege of seeing."

Many have taken in hand to write descriptions of spring, and some few painstaking persons have nerved themselves to read what has been written I turn to the prologue of the "Canterbury Tales", it is not about spring, it is spring, and I am among those who long to go upon a pilgrimage A description of a jungle is an impertinence to one who has come under the spell of William Blake's

Tiger! tiger! burning bright  
In the forest of the night

Those fierce eyes glowing there in the darkness sufficiently illuminate the scene Immediately it is midsummer, and we feel all its delicious languor when Browning's David sings of

The sleep in the dried river-channel where bulrushes tell  
That the water was wont to go warbling so softly and well

The first essential to the enjoyment of poetry is leisure The demon *Hurry* is the tempter, and knowledge is the forbidden fruit in the poet's paradise To enjoy poetry, you must renounce not only your easily besetting sins, but your easily besetting virtues as well You must not be industrious, or argumentative, or conscientious, or strenuous I do not mean that you must be a person of unlimited leisure and without visible means of support I have known some very conscientious students of literature who, when off duty, found time to enjoy poetry I mean that if you have only half an hour for poetry, for that half hour you must be in a leisurely frame of mind

The poet differs from the novelist in that he requires us to rest from our labors The ordinary novel is easy reading, because it takes us as we are, in the midst of our hurry The mind has been going at express speed all the day, what the novelist does is to turn the switch, and off we go on another track The steam is up, and the wheels go around just the same The great thing is still action, and we eagerly turn the pages to see what is going to happen next,—unless we are reading some of our modern realistic studies of character Even

then we are lured on by the expectation that, at the last moment, something may happen. But when we turn to the poets, we are in the land of the lotus-eaters. The atmosphere is that of a perfect day,

Whereon it is enough for me  
Not to be doing, but to be

Into this land our daily cares cannot follow us. It is an

enchanted land, we know not where,  
But lovely as a landscape in a dream.

Once in this enchanted country, haste seems foolish. Why should we toil on as if we were walking for a wager? It is as if one had the privilege of joining Isaak Walton as he loiters in the cool shade of a sweet honeysuckle hedge, and should churlishly trudge on along the dusty highway rather than accept the gentle angler's invitation. "Pray, let us rest ourselves in this sweet, shady arbor of jessamine and myrtle, and I will requite you with a bottle of sack, and when you have pledged me, I will repeat the verses I promised you." One may, as a matter of strict conscience, be both a pedestrian and a prohibitionist, and yet not find it in his heart to decline such an invitation.

The poets who delight us with their verses are not always serious-minded persons with an important thought to communicate. When I read,

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure-dome decree,

I am not a bit wiser than I was before, but I am a great deal happier, although I have not the slightest idea where Xanadu was, and only the vaguest notion of Kubla Khan.

There are poems whose charm lies in their illusiveness. Fancy anyone trying to explain Rossetti's "Blessed Damsel." Yet when the mood is on us we see her as she leans

From the gold bar of Heaven  
Her eyes were deeper than the depth  
Of waters stilled at even,  
She had three lilies in her hand  
And the stars in her hair were seven

We look over the mystic ramparts and are dimly conscious  
that

the souls mounting up to God  
Went by her like thin flames

This is not astronomy nor theology, nor any of the things we  
know all about—it is only poetry

Let no one trouble me by attempting to elucidate "Childe  
Roland to the Dark Tower came" I do not care for a Baedeker  
I prefer to lose my way I love the darkness rather than light  
I do not care for a topographical chart of the hills that

like giants at a hunting lay,  
Chin upon hand.

The mood in which we enjoy such poetry is that described  
in Emerson's "Forerunners"

Long I followed happy guides,  
I could never reach their sides

But no speed of mine avails  
To hunt upon their shining trails

On eastern hills I see their smokes,  
Mixed with mist by distant locks  
I met many travellers  
Who the road had surely kept  
They saw not my fine revelers

If our thoughts make haste to join these "fine revelers," rejoicing  
in the sense of freedom and mystery, delighting in the

must and the wind, careless of attaining so that we may follow the shining trails, all is well

As there are poems which are not meant to be understood, so there are poems that are not meant to be read, that is, to be read through. There is Keats's "Endymion," for instance. I have never been able to get on with it. Yet it is delightful,—that is the very reason why I do not care to get on with it. Wherever I begin, I feel that I might as well stay where I am. It is a sweet wilderness into which the reader is introduced.

Paths there were many,  
Winding through palmy fern and rushes fenny  
And ivy banks, all leading pleasantly  
To a wide lawn

Who could tell  
The freshness of the space of heaven above,  
Edged round with dark tree-tops?—through which a dove  
Would often beat its wings, and often, too,  
A little cloud would move across the blue

We are brought into the very midst of this pleasantness. Deep in the wood we see fair faces and garments white. We see the shepherds coming to the woodland altar.

A crowd of shepherds with as sunburned looks  
As may be read of in Arcadian books,  
Such as sat list'ning round Apollo's pipe  
When the great deity, for earth too ripe,  
Let his divinity o'erflowing die  
In music, through the vales of Thessaly

We see the venerable priest pouring out the sweet-scented wine, and then we see the young Endymion himself —

He seemed  
To common lookers-on like one who dreamed  
Of idleness in groves Elysian

What happened next? What did Endymion do? Really, I do not know. It is so much pleasanter, at this point, to close the

book, and dream "of idleness in groves Elysian" The chances are that when one turns to the poem again he will not begin where he left off, but at the beginning, and read as if he had never read it before, or rather, with more enjoyment because he has read it so many times —

A thing of beauty is a joy forever  
 Its loveliness increases, it will never  
 Pass into nothingness, but still will keep  
 A bower quiet for us, and a sleep  
 Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing

Shelley describes a mood such as Keats brings to us —

My spirit like a charmed bark doth swim  
 Upon the liquid waves of thy sweet singing  
 Far away into regions dim  
 Of rapture, as a boat with swift sails winging  
 Its way adown some many-winding river

He who finds himself afloat upon the "many-winding river" throws aside the laboring oar. It is enough to float on,—he cares not whither

What greater pleasure is there than in the "Idylls of the King" provided we do not study them, but dream them. We must enter into the poet's own mood —

I seemed  
 To sail with Arthur under looming shores,  
 Point after point, till on to dawn, when dreams  
 Begin to feel the truth and stir of day

It is good to be there, in that far-off time, good to come to Camelot —

Built by old kings, age after age,  
 So strange and rich and dim

All we see of kings, and magicians, and ladies, and knights is "strange and rich and dim" Over everything is a luminous haze. There are



hollow trappings up and down,  
And muffled voices heard, and shadows past

There is the flashing of swords, the weaving of spells, the seeing of visions All these things become real to us, not simply the stainless king and the sinful queen, the prowess of Lancelot and the love of Elaine, but the magic of Merlin and the sourceless of Vivien, with her charms

Of woven paces and of waving hands

And we must stand at last with King Arthur on the shore of the mystic sea, and see the barge come slowly with the three queens, "black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream", and hear across the water a cry,

As it were one voice, an agony  
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills  
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,  
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

But what good is there in all this? Why waste time on idle dreams? We hear Walt Whitman's challenge to romantic poetry —

Arthur vanished with all his knights, Merlin and Lancelot  
and Galahad, all gone, dissolved utterly like an exhalation,  
Embroidered, dazzling, foreign world, with all its gorgeous legends, myths,  
Its kings and castles proud, its priests and warlike lords and courtly dames,  
Passed to its charnel vault, coffined with crown and armor on,  
Blazoned with Shakspere's purple page  
And dirged by Tennyson's sweet sad rhyme

Away with the old romance! Make room for the modern bard,  
who is

Bluffed not a bit by drain-pipes, gasometers, and artificial fertilizers



There speaks the poet declaring the true faith, which except a man believe he is condemned everlastingly to the outer darkness His task is selective No matter about the murkiness of the cloud he must make us see the ray of perfect light In the mad Babel-din he must hear and repeat the strain of pure music As to the field of choice, it may be as wide as the world, but he must choose as a poet, and not after the manner of the man with the muck-rake

In this broad earth of ours  
Amid the measureless grossness and the slag,  
Inclosed and safe within the central heart  
Nestles the seed perfection

When the poet delves in the grossness and the slag, he does so as one engaged in the search for the perfect

"My feeling," says the Gentle Reader, "about the proper material for poetry, is very much like that of Whitman in regard to humanity—

When warrantee deeds loafe in chairs opposite, and are my  
friendly companions,  
I intend to reach them my hand and make as much of  
them as I do of men and women like you

"So I say, when drain pipes and cross-cut saws and the beef in the butcher's stalls are invested with beautiful associations and thrill my soul in some mysterious fashion, then I will make as much of these things as I do of the murmuring pines and the hemlocks When a poet makes bank clerks and stevedores and wood-choppers to loom before my imagination in heroic proportions, I will receive them as I do the heroes of old But, mind you, the miracle must be actually performed, I will not be put off with a prospectus"

Now and then the miracle is performed We are made to feel the romance that surrounds the American pioneer, we hear the

Crackling blows of axes sounding musically, driven by  
strong arms

But, for the most part, Whitman, when under the influence of deep feeling, forgets his theory, and uses as his symbols those things which have already been invested with poetical associations. Turn to that marvelous dirge, "When Lilacs last in the Dooryard bloomed." There is here no catalogue of facts or events, no parade of glaring realism. Tennyson's "sweet sad rhyme" has nowhere more delicious music than we find in the measured cadence of these lines. We are not told the news of the assassination of Lincoln as a man on the street might tell it. It comes to us through suggestion. We are made to feel a mood, not to listen to the description of an event. There is symbolism, suggestion, color, mystery. We inhale the languorous fragrance of the lilacs, we see the drooping star, in secluded recesses we hear "a shy and hidden bird" warbling a song, there are dim-lit churches and shuddering organs and tolling bells, and there is one soul heart-broken, seeing all and hearing all.

Comrades mine and I in the midst, and their memory ever  
to keep, for the dead I loved so well,  
For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands—  
and this for his dear sake,  
Lilac and star and bird twined with the chant of my soul,  
There in the fragrant pines and the cedars dusk and dim

This is real poetry, and yet while we yield to the charm we are conscious that it is made up of the old familiar elements.

Tennyson's apology to a utilitarian age was not needed —

Perhaps some modern touches here and there  
Redeemed it from the charge of nothingness

The "modern touches" we can spare. The modern life we have always with us, but it is a rare privilege to enjoy the best things of the past. It is the poet who is the minister of this fine grace. The historian tells us what men of the past did, the philosopher tells us how their civilizations developed and decayed, we smile at their superstitions, and pride ourselves upon our progress. But the ethereal part has vanished, that which made

their very superstitions beautiful and cast a halo over their struggles. These are the elements out of which the poet creates his world, into which we may enter. In the order of historic development chivalry must give way before democracy, and loyalty to the king must fade before the increasing sense of liberty and equality, but the highest ideals of chivalry may remain. Imaginative and romantic poetry has this high mission to preserve what otherwise would be lost. It lifts the mind above the daily routine into the region of pure joy. Whatever necessary changes take place in the world we find, in

All lovely tales which we have heard or read,  
An endless fountain of immortal drink,  
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink

I have said that one may be a true poet without having any very important thought to communicate, but it must be said that most of the great poets have been serious thinkers as well. They have had their philosophy of life, their thoughts about nature and about human duty and destiny. It is the function of the poet not only to create for us an ideal world and to fill it with ideal creatures, but also to reveal to us the ideal element in the actual world.

"I do not know what poetical is," says Audrey. "Is it honest in deed and word? Is it a true thing?" We must not answer with Touchstone. "No, truly! for the truest poetry is the most feigning."

The poetical interpretation of the world is not feigning, it is a true thing,—the truest thing of which we can know. The grace and sublimity which we see through the poet's eyes are real. We must, however, still insist on our main contention. The poet, if he is to hold us, must always be a poet. His thought must be in solution, and not appear as a dull precipitate of prose. He may be philosophical, but he must not philosophize. He may be moral, but he must not moralize. He may be religious, but let him spare his homilies.

"Whatever the philosopher saith should be done," said Sir

Philip Sidney, "the peerless poet giveth a perfect picture of it He yeldeth to the power of the mind an image of that of which the philosopher bestoweth but a wordish description

The poet doth not only show the way, but doth give so sweet a prospect unto the way as will entice any man to enter it Nay, he doth as if your journey should lie through a fair vineyard, at first give you a cluster of grapes "

We have a right to ask our poets to be pleasant companions even when they discourse on the highest themes Even when they have theories of their own about what we should enjoy, let us not allow them to foist upon us "wordish descriptions" of excellent things instead of poetry When the poet invites me to go with him I first ask, "Let me taste your grapes "

You remember Mr By-ends in the "Pilgrim's Progress,"—how he said of Christian and Hopeful, "They are headstrong men who think it their duty to rush on in their journey in all weathers, while I am for waiting for wind or tide I am for Religion when he walks in his silver slippers in the sunshine " That was very reprehensible in Mr By-ends, and he richly deserved the rebuke which was afterward administered to him But when we change the subject, and speak, not of Religion, but of poetry, I confess that I am very much of Mr By-ends' way of thinking There are literary Puritans who, when they take up the study of a poet, make it a point of conscience to go on to the bitter end of his poetical works If they start with Wordsworth on his "Excursion," they trudge on in all weathers. They *do* the poem, as when going abroad they do Europe in six weeks As the revival hymn says, "doing is a deadly thing " Let me say, good Christian and Hopeful, that though I admire your persistence, I cannot accompany you I am for a poet only when he puts on his singing robes and walks in the sunshine As for those times when he goes on prosing in rhyme from force of habit, I think it is more respectful as well as more pleasurable to allow him to walk alone

Shelley's definition of poetry as "the record of the best and

happiest moments of the happiest and best minds" suggests the whole duty of the reader. All that is required of him is to obey the Golden Rule. There must be perfect reciprocity and fraternal sympathy. The poet, being human, has his unhappy hours, when all things are full of labor. Upon such hours the Gentle Reader does not intrude. In their happiest moments they meet as if by chance. In this encounter they are pleased with one another and with the world they live in. How could it be otherwise? It is indeed a wonderful world, transfigured in the light of thought. Familiar objects lose their sharp outlines and become symbols of universal realities. Likenesses, before unthought of, appear. Nature becomes a mirror of the soul, and answers instantly to each passing mood. Words are no longer chosen, they come unbidden as the poet and his reader

mount to Paradise  
By the stairway of surprise

## Literature of Knowledge and Literature of Power

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THOMAS DE QUINCEY

Thomas De Quincey (1785-1859) was one of the most brilliantly stylistic of the famous group of literary critics and essayists which included such masters of English prose as Lamb, Hazlitt, Jeffrey, and Sydney Smith. De Quincey's elvish personality and magical command of prose-poetry is reflected better than in the literary definition printed below, in the well known *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, and in "Levanna and Our Ladies of Sorrow" and other dream-sketches from *Suspiria de Profundis*. The present essay is a part of an article on Pope written for the *North British Review*, August, 1848.

WHAT is it that we mean by *literature*? Popularly, and amongst the thoughtless, it is held to include everything that is printed in a book. Little logic is required to disturb *that* definition. The most thoughtless person is easily made aware that in the idea of *literature* one essential element is some relation to a general and common interest of man,—so that what applies only to a local, or professional, or merely personal interest, even though presenting itself in the shape of a book, will not belong to Literature. So far the definition is easily narrowed, and it is as easily expanded. For not only is much that takes a station in books not literature, but inversely, much that really *is* literature never reaches a station in books. The weekly sermons of Christendom, that vast pulpit literature which acts so extensively upon the popular mind—to warn, to uphold, to renew, to comfort, to alarm—does not attain the sanctuary of libraries in the ten-thousandth part of its extent. The drama again,—as, for instance, the finest part of Shake-



speare's plays in England, and all leading Athenian plays in the noontide of the Attic stage,—operated as a literature on the public mind, and were (according to the strictest letter of that term) *published* through the audiences that witnessed their representation some time before they were published as things to be read, and they were published in this scenical mode of publication with much more effect than they could have had as books during ages of costly copying or of costly printing

Books, therefore, do not suggest an idea coextensive and interchangeable with the idea of literature, since much literature, scenic, forensic, or didactic (as from lecturers and public orators), may never come into books, and much that does come into books may connect itself with no literary interest. But a far more important correction, applicable to the common vague idea of literature, is to be sought not so much in a better definition of literature as in a sharper distinction of the two functions which it fulfils. In that great social organ which, collectively, we call literature, there may be distinguished two separate offices, that may blend and often do so, but capable, severally, of a severe insulation, and naturally fitted for reciprocal repulsion. There is, first, the literature of *knowledge*, and secondly, the literature of *power*. The function of the first is to *teach*, the function of the second is to *move*, the first is a rudder, the second an oar or a sail. The first speaks to the mere discursive understanding, the second speaks ultimately, it may happen, to the higher understanding or reason, but always through affections of pleasure and sympathy. Remotely, it may travel towards an object seated in what Lord Bacon calls "dry light", but proximately it does and must operate—else it ceases to be a literature of power—on and through that *humid* light which clothes itself in the mists and glittering iris of human passions, desires, and genial emotions. Men have so little reflected on the higher functions of literature as to find it a paradox if one should describe it as a mean or subordinate purpose of books to give information. But this is a paradox only in the sense which makes it honourable to be paradoxical. Whenever we talk in

ordinary language of seeking information or gaining knowledge, we understand the words as connected with something of absolute novelty. But it is the grandeur of all truth which can occupy a very high place in human interests that it is never absolutely novel to the meanest of minds, it exists eternally by way of germ or latent principle in the lowest as in the highest, needing to be developed, but never to be planted. To be capable of transplantation is the immediate criterion of a truth that ranges on a lower scale. Besides which, there is a rarer thing than truth,—namely *power*, or deep sympathy with truth. What is the effect, for instance, upon society of children? By the pity, by the tenderness, and by the peculiar modes of admiration which connect themselves with the helplessness, with the innocence, and with the simplicity of children, not only are the primal affections strengthened and continually renewed, but the qualities which are dearest in the sight of heaven—the frailty, for instance, which appeals to forbearance, the innocence which symbolizes the heavenly, and the simplicity which is most alien from the worldly—are kept up in perpetual remembrance, and their ideals are continually refreshed. A purpose of the same nature is answered by the higher literature, viz the literature of power. What do you learn from *Paradise Lost*? Nothing at all. What do you learn from a cookery-book? Something new, something that you did not know before, in every paragraph. But would you therefore put the wretched cookery-book on a higher level of estimation than the divine poem? What you owe to Milton is not any knowledge, of which a million separate items are still but a million of advancing steps on the same earthly level, what you owe is *power*,—that is, exercise and expansion to your own latent capacity of sympathy with the infinite, where every pulse and each separate influx is a step upwards, a step ascending as upon a Jacob's ladder from earth to mysterious altitudes above the earth. All the steps of knowledge, from first to last, carry you further on the same plane, but could never raise you one foot above your ancient level of earth,

whereas the very first step in power is a flight—is an ascending movement into another element where earth is forgotten

Were it not that human sensibilities are ventilated and continually called out into exercise by the great phenomena of infancy, or of real life as it moves through chance and change, or of literature as it recombines these elements in the mimicries of poetry, romance, etc., it is certain that, like any animal power or muscular energy falling into disuse, all such sensibilities would gradually droop and dwindle. It is in relation to these great *moral* capacities of man that the literature of power, as contradistinguished from that of knowledge, lives and has its field of action. It is concerned with what is highest in man, for the Scriptures themselves never condescended to deal by suggestion or cooperation with the mere discursive understanding when speaking of man in his intellectual capacity, the Scriptures speak not of the understanding, but of “the understanding heart,”—making the heart, i.e., the great *intuitive* (or non-discursive) organ, to be the interchangeable formula for man in his highest state of capacity for the infinite. Tragedy, romance, fairy tale, or epopee, all alike restore to man’s mind the ideals of justice, of hope, of truth, of mercy, of retribution, which else (left to the support of daily life in its realities) would languish for want of sufficient illustration.

What is meant, for instance, by *poetic justice*? It does not mean a justice that differs by its object from the ordinary justice of human jurisprudence, for then it must be confessedly a very bad kind of justice, but it means a justice that differs from common forensic justice by the degree in which it attains its object,—a justice that is more omnipotent over its own ends, as dealing, not with the refractory elements of earthly life, but with the elements of its own creation, and with materials flexible to its own purest preconceptions. It is certain that, were it not for the literature of power, these ideals would often remain amongst us as mere arid notional forms, whereas, by the creative forces of man put forth in literature, they gain a vernal life of restoration, and germinate into vital activities.

The commonest novel, by moving in alliance with human fears and hopes, with human instincts of wrong and right, sustains and quickens those affections. Calling them into action, it rescues them from torpor. And hence the preeminency over all authors that merely *teach*, of the meanest that *moves*, or that teaches, if at all, indirectly by moving. The very highest work that has ever existed in the literature of knowledge is but a provisional work,—a book upon trial and sufferance, and *quamdiu bene se gesserit*<sup>1</sup>. Let its teaching be even partially revised, let it be but expanded,—nay, even let its teaching be but placed in a better order,—and instantly it is superseded. Whereas the feeblest works in the literature of power, surviving at all, survive as finished and unalterable amongst men. For instance, the *Principia* of Sir Isaac Newton was a book militant on earth from the first. In all stages of its progress it would have to fight for its existence: first, as regards absolute truth, secondly, when that combat was over, as regards its form or mode of presenting the truth. And as soon as a Laplace, or anybody else, builds higher upon the foundations laid by this book, effectually he throws it out of the sunshine into decay and darkness, by weapons won from this book he superannuates and destroys this book, so that soon the name of Newton remains as a mere *nomius umbra*,<sup>2</sup> but his book, as a living power, has transmigrated into other forms. Now, on the contrary, the *Iliad*, the *Prometheus* of Æschylus, the *Othello* or *King Lear*, the *Hamlet* or *Macbeth*, and the *Paradise Lost*, are not militant, but triumphant forever, as long as the languages exist in which they speak or can be taught to speak. They never *can* transmigrate into new incarnations. To reproduce these in new forms, or variations, even if in some things they should be improved, would be to plagiarize. A good steam-engine is properly superseded by a better. But one lovely pastoral valley is not superseded by another, nor a statue of Praxiteles by a statue of Michael Angelo. These things are

<sup>1</sup> "As long as it behaves itself."

<sup>2</sup> Shadow of a name.

separated not by imparity, but by disparity They are not thought of as unequal under the same standard, but as different in *kind*, and, if otherwise equal, as equal under a different standard Human works of immortal beauty and works of nature in one respect stand on the same footing they never absolutely repeat each other, they never approach so near as not to differ, and they differ not as better and worse, or simply by more and less,—they differ by undecipherable and incommunicable differences, that cannot be caught by mimicries, that cannot be reflected in the mirror of copies, that cannot become ponderable in the scales of vulgar comparison At this hour, five hundred years since their creation, the tales of Chaucer, never equaled on this earth for their tenderness and for life of picturesqueness, are read familiarly by many in the charming language of their natal day, and by others in the modernizations of Dryden, of Pope, and Wordsworth At this hour, one thousand eight hundred years since their creation, the pagan tales of Ovid, never equaled on this earth for the gaiety of their movement and the capricious graces of their narrative, are read by all Christendom This man's people and their monuments are dust, but *he* is alive, he has survived them, as he told us that he had it in his commission to do, by a thousand years, "and shall a thousand more"

All the literature of knowledge builds only ground-nests, that are swept away by floods, or confounded by the plough, but the literature of power builds nests in aerial altitudes of temples sacred from violation, or of forests inaccessible to fraud This is a great prerogative of the *power* literature, and it is a greater which lies in the mode of its influence The *knowledge* literature, like the fashion of this world, passeth away An encyclopædia is its abstract, and, in this respect, it may be taken for its speaking symbol,—that before one generation has passed an encyclopædia is superannuated, for it speaks through the dead memory and unimpassioned understanding, which have not the repose of higher faculties, but are continually enlarging and varying their phylacteries But all literature

properly so called—literature *κατ' ἐξοχήν*<sup>3</sup>—for the very reason that it is so much more durable than the literature of knowledge, is (and by the very same proportion it is) more intense and electrically searching in its impressions. The directions in which the tragedy of this planet has trained our human feelings to play, and the combinations into which the poetry of this planet has thrown our human passions of love and hatred, of admiration and contempt, exercise a power for bad or good over human life that cannot be contemplated, when stretching through many generations, without a sentiment allied to awe. And of this let every one be assured—that he owes to the impassioned books which he has read many a thousand more of emotions than he can consciously trace back to them. Dim by their origination, these emotions yet arise in him, and mould him through life, like forgotten incidents of his childhood.

Par excellence

## The Tempo of American Life<sup>1</sup>

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JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS

James Truslow Adams (1878- ), interpreter and critic of American life and manners. In 1922, he received the Pulitzer Prize for the best book on the history of the United States. One of the most important biographies of recent years, *The Adams Family*, traces the history and importance of this talented group. *The Epic of America* is conceded to be one of the best insights into the American scene.

THE newly arrived tourist from Europe to America receives a vast number of rather staggering impressions. Landing annually here myself, I also receive a great number, but they are in a different key from those of the foreigner. America being my own land and New York my "home town," its skyscrapers, its taxi-drivers, speakeasies, and Sunday newspapers have no novelty. They have long ceased to strike me as extraordinary. But there is one thing that never fails to strike me annually, and as unequivocally, one might say as brutally, as it does the foreigner. That is the abrupt change in the tempo of life.

The trip itself in no way prepares one for it. I have made it so often that it is not in itself at all an exciting event. The six days at sea, spent mostly in sleeping, eating, and reading, merely prolong, and even lower the tempo of living I left in London, where my work keeps me a good deal of the time. But from the moment I have won my way, in fierce fight, into a taxi at the dock, I am conscious of an overwhelming change. The most recent French author to write a book on us after a few weeks' trip, in which his admiration is expressed with a vio-

<sup>1</sup> From *Harpers Magazine*. Reprinted by permission of the author.

lence only equalled by its lack of critical quality, notes that "*le rythme du pays tout entier est à cent quand le nôtre est à dix*" "the rhythm of the whole country is a hundred while ours is ten" As the rhythm of London is distinctly slower than that of Paris, it is quite evident why in passing from my quiet flat off Campden Hill to a fifteenth-story room overlooking Forty-second Street I find this difference in tempo almost appalling On my return to Europe the impression is each time as strong, only reversed "On landing in England," one of the ladies of my party remarked last trip, "I always feel as though someone had put a cool hand on my forehead" When we landed some months ago and drove to our flat through Trafalgar Square there was a larger crowd collected than I had ever seen there before Amy Johnson, for the moment the idol of the people after her flight to Australia, had just passed on her way to be received by the King But the contrast with New York, seven days behind us, was little short of amazing "How strangely quiet it is," my wife said, "it's just like Sunday"

I doubt if there were any such difference noticeable in the eighteenth century At least the book-writing traveler, whom we have always had with us, did not at that period make comments which would indicate marked difference between the pace of life here and abroad By 1835, however, we find De Tocqueville writing that "no sooner do you set your foot upon American ground than you are stunned by a kind of tumult, a confused clamor is heard on every side, and a thousand simultaneous voices demand the satisfaction of their social wants" From that day to this the difference has been markedly increasing

But if there is a vast difference in tempo between Europe and America, there is also as great a one between the life of our own generation on each side of the water and that of our respective fathers and grandfathers on each side It is true that some forms of nervous and useless hustle date from longer ago than we might think One of the most characteristic scenes in



America may be witnessed any morning at the Lackawanna or Erie stations on the Jersey shore when scores of commuters leap from their trains and join in a mad flight for the Tube, where the trains run to Manhattan, I believe, on a three-minute schedule. To most of those whose coat-tails fly in the breeze and whose hearts before long will begin to act queerly, the three minutes can really be of slight importance. It is merely instinctive reaction to the thought of *a* train to be caught, though a leisurely walk to the next one would serve their purpose as well and their hearts better. In Allan Nevins' delightful history of editorial writing, I find, however, that when the Fulton Ferry was new, and the fastest means of transport between Brooklyn and Manhattan, a similar scene could be witnessed daily at the slip. On the whole, nevertheless, if one thinks over the sort of life led in innumerable homes a generation ago, the fact of an immense speeding up in the process of living is clear and true. People then, as we say, "had time." Now, no one "has time." Why not? Is there really a speeding up process at work throughout the world? And if there is, what does it consist in and what are its effects to be?

Some years ago in a noteworthy effort to establish history on a scientific basis, Henry Adams attempted to fit certain phenomena of society into the laws of physics. He himself was quite aware of the extremely tentative nature of his suggestions, and I need not here discuss again the reasons for what I believe to have been his failure, which I gave in the *Yale Review* recently. Even if Adams did not succeed, his work was immensely interesting, and I believe will receive more attention in the future than it has in the past. In his effort to bring some sort of order out of the multitudinous "facts" of human history, Adams was struck by the very point which we are considering, that is, the change in tempo, which he chose to call, in terms of physics, "acceleration." Using man's consumption of power, and the physical law of squares, as data and method, he tried to plot a curve of man's destiny. I will not here involve the reader farther in Adams's theory. He made

the mistake of using concepts in one field of thought that belonged only to another. But that there is some law of acceleration at work in the universe as applied to man would seem to be true. I shall merely try to give some of the indications without myself attempting in turn any expression of them in physical laws.

## II

No one knows where or when some lower form of being first took on distinctly human characteristics. It has been estimated that the Java Ape Man, *Pithecanthropus*, lived a half million years ago. A million years have been given to the skull recently found in China. Whatever validity these guesses may or may not have, we can safely give man several hundred thousand years before he rises above the stage of stone implements and hunting. During this long period he was called on to make few adjustments to any change in environment. These were probably called forth by the terrific changes in climate due to the periods of Arctic cold, alternating with far longer periods of tropical heat. As Professor Coleman says in his *Ice Ages*, "these short spells of trial and stress meant far more for the development of the world's inhabitants than all the long periods of ease and sloth when the earth was a hothouse." He adds that, "it may be that the races of civilized men are merely evanescent phenomena bound up with the bracing climate of a brief ice-age, to sink, after a few more thousand years, into a state of tropical sloth and barbarism when the world shall have fallen back into its usual relaxing warmth and moisture, the East African conditions which have been so customary in the past." However this may be, the tempo of change, due to climate, which was all to which the hunting, eating, sleeping, breeding man of these hundreds of thousands of years had to adjust himself, was a rhythm in which the swings could be measured in tens of thousands of years. It was a tempo of inconceivable slowness.

As he made discoveries—fire, smelting of copper and iron, the wheel, agriculture, domestication of animals—the tempo quickened a bit, but vast spaces of time were still allowed for adjustments. Even when we get into the historical period of recorded history—a mere few thousand years compared with the hundreds of thousands behind it—we find a slow rhythm in such major social phenomena as the rise and fall of empires and civilizations. In the Far East, discarding centuries of earlier myth, we have reliable history of China for over two thousand years, and find Japan paying tribute to her before Augustus defeated Antony and Cleopatra at the battle of Actium. And Japan and China remained almost unchanged till yesterday. The civilization in Crete can be traced from 3000 B C to its decadence about 1100 B C. The art history of Egypt extends from 4000 B C until she was finally conquered in 525 B C. If national periods of two and three thousand years seem long to us, yet they were brief compared to the long pulsations of climate in the dawn of man. The pulse was beating faster. The tempo of life was increasing.

I need not trace the changes in the Middle Ages and down to the nineteenth century—the introduction of gunpowder, the invention of printing, the new scientific ideas, later the discovery of America, and the opening of a new world on all sides. They are familiar to every schoolboy. The tempo of life, the need for constant readjustment was showing another great increase for the individual and for society. But even so, what we may call this third period in the history of the acceleration of our life was still slow in comparison with that next in store. A few events will give us a rough measure for the tempo prevailing in it. The thirteenth century saw the invention of the mariner's compass, the fourteenth that of gunpowder, the fifteenth, printing and the discovery of America, the sixteenth, the circumnavigation of the globe and the invention of the spinning wheel, the seventeenth, the telescope, Galileo's trial, and the first newspaper, the end of the eighteenth, the spinning jenny and the cotton gin. Each century

was bringing an important invention or two, and the human mind was being called on to make increasingly rapid adjustments to new modes of thought. But the population of the world was still overwhelmingly agricultural in occupation, and the speed of communication, when there was any, was still limited to the tempo of the past ten thousand years—that of a horse by land and a sailing ship by sea. With the first successful use of the steam locomotive in 1804 and the steamboat in 1807, a new era dawned. During the next century every decade brought its discoveries which in their aggregate have completely altered the entire social structure, occupational life, and intellectual outlook of mankind. In a very general way, intended to be merely suggestive and not accurate, we may denote “wave lengths” in the tempo of life in the four periods as 30,000, 3000, 100, 10.

There are indications that in our own period, the fourth, we are not yet at the end of the process, and that the tempo is still being quickened. Take, for example, the length of the business cycle, which is the resultant of a great mass of social and psychological factors. During the nineteenth century its length was about twenty years, but many economists are of the opinion, which seems to be borne out by the facts, that under the conditions under which we now live we must expect short, sharp setbacks at much more frequent intervals, that is that the business rhythm is essentially a faster one. The investor with long experience is fully conscious of the effect of our faster tempo. A decade or two may be all that embraces the life of a great and colossally profitable industry from its beginning to its decadence, as for example the bicycle industry of the 1890's, and the automobile industry, which has been the marvel of the world for two decades but which would seem now to be facing the much retarded pace of replacement sales instead of installation ones. The same speeding up has taken place in the life of the workman, not only in the speeding up of his daily work, but in concentrating his working life between school and forty or forty-five years of age, and cutting

down what was often a lifelong relation to his employer to a daily or weekly wage contract

The reader can follow out the process for himself in almost every department of life. In art and literature "periods" follow one another with such rapidity as to be in danger of telescoping, and assume the air of mere fads. In public taste the same quickening of rhythm is notable. Publishers will tell you that the life of a book is now considerably shorter than twenty years ago and that the profit to be made from it, if made, must be made much more quickly. The tempo of life varies with occupation and location, being slowest on the farm, though with radio and automobile it has been greatly speeded up there. For the general tempo of our country, therefore (and the same is more or less true of others), it is notable that whereas in 1790 about ninety per cent of the entire population lived on farms, in 1925 only twenty-five per cent did so. The tempo of their mental life, as of the population at large of all classes, may be measured by the length of time it has taken for revolutionary ideas to be taken into the intellectual outlook of the general public. Copernicus published his *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* in 1543, and I think we may say that it was a century and a half before his theory had really permeated the thinking of the mass. Darwin published his *Origin of Species* in 1859, and it was perhaps forty years or so before evolution was generally recognized as safe and respectable doctrine. It was hardly a few months after Einstein proclaimed his theory of relativity before it was beginning to be taken up into the general discussions and outlook of vast numbers of people, even if in a half-understood way. We may also note that whole nations, with a total population of well on to a billion, such as India, China, and Japan, have suddenly had the tempo of their lives altered from that of the very beginning of the historic period to that of the fastest pulse beat of the West. Alteration in the position of woman has been less a change in tempo perhaps than a mere added source of confusion.

But I need not labor the point longer. It seems to me that as we survey the entire past of man the fact emerges clearly that his life shows a perpetually increasing tempo. The movement grows always faster, never slower. The phenomenon would appear to be a law of nature, though our knowledge is not of a sufficiently exact sort to enable us to establish reference points for the plotting of an accurate curve. Such a curve, however, if we accept roughly the four periods noted above, would show a very long, slowly ascending line for the first period, a sharp upward swing at the beginning of the historic period, and a more rapidly ascending line for a shorter length, another sharp deflection upward around the Middle Ages, and a yet shorter rising line, and lastly, for us to-day, a very sharp upward turn and a very short but almost vertically rising line to 1930. Given that much, the makers of graphs may amuse themselves by plotting it into our future. The optimists might not be satisfied with the result, but after all we need not press the graphic representation too far. Let us try to search the more immediate future a little without the aid of the law of squares.

### III

At this point, if the reader has followed me thus far, he may ask just what do we mean, after all, by the "tempo of life"? Perhaps a clearer definition would be wise before we attempt to appraise the effect of an accelerated tempo on man. Whether any more "events" are happening in the universe now than in earlier times would lead us into unfathomable bogs of metaphysics, but for our purpose it is enough to grant that more events are happening to each man of which he is conscious. In other words, a resident of New York to-day is getting more sensations and of a more varied sort than the Neanderthal or early man of several hundreds of thousands of years ago. Owing to this number and variety of sensations and his constantly shifting environment, modern man is also called upon

to make a far greater number of adjustments to the universe than was his remote relative in the caves and forests of Germany or Java. It is the number of these sensations and adjustments in a given time that makes the tempo of life. As the number and variety of sensations increase, the time which we have for reacting to and digesting them becomes less, as it does also for adjusting ourselves to our environment when that alters at an advancing rate. The rhythm of our life becomes quicker, the wave lengths, to borrow a physical concept, of that kind of force which is our mental life grow shorter. If I am right in what I have outlined in a somewhat vague and general fashion above, our mental life has altered its rhythm four times, each time the wave length of the force growing shorter, the vibration more rapid. Does this have any effect upon us? I think there is no question but what it does.

Rhythm in the universe is fundamental in its effect upon our minds. For example, certain rhythmical waves of energy (to use a loose term), of long wave length and low frequency, make themselves known to us as heat, increase the rhythm a little by shortening the wave length and increasing the frequency, and we become aware of them as color, continue the process, and we get electricity, do so again, and we get a phenomenon which we can use but cannot perceive by our senses, the X-rays, and so on. A change of rhythm, whatever it may be in reality, is for us a change in essential nature.

I do not wish to press physical concepts too far and so I suggest an effect of rhythm which we encounter whenever we read poetry, and, though we are less conscious of it, prose. Certain sorts of thought or emotion go with certain rhythms. Let us take at haphazard two quotations from Shakespeare, the first being adapted by him from an old ballad.

King Stephen was a worthy peer,  
His breeches cost him but a crown,  
He held them sixpence all too dear,  
With that he called the tailor lown.

Now let us take another

To die, to sleep,  
To sleep perchance to dream ay, there's the rub,  
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come  
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
Must give us pause

Neither of these series of thoughts could be expressed in the rhythm of the other without profoundly altering its effect upon us. There is something in ourselves, some long-established rhythm of our own, which reacts in various ways to the rhythms of the outer world. A marked alteration in the tempo of life might, therefore, be expected to alter profoundly, possibly disastrously, our reactions. To use an extreme example: if, owing to a sudden shift, heat waves became sensed by us as light, and electricity as heat, and light as X-rays, we should become so completely out of adjustment that the result would be a breakdown. To a lesser but a real extent, the same result comes from a sudden change in the tempo of our lives. We are all familiar with the effect which sudden wealth is apt to have upon its acquirer. It is because there has been for him a sudden change in tempo—a great increase in the number and variety of sensations and in the number of called-for adjustments.

One marked effect, both for good and evil, in a rapidly changing environment is the difficulty or impossibility of acquiring habits. To cite a simple example, last year I knew where almost everything I wanted in New York was—my broker, bank, the Consolidated ticket office, my friends' homes and telephone numbers. When I was there this year almost every one had shifted. I had to learn them all over again. My habits had become utterly useless, indeed, worse, for they led me in wrong directions. This break-up of habit may have had the advantage of leading me to new places and buildings but, on the other hand, life becomes too wearing and impossible without habits. We have to perform a great many acts as easily as walk-



ing or eating or we waste an enormous amount of energy for nothing, just as we should if we had to watch over our stomachs for an hour after each meal to see that they digested properly. A considerable habit-pattern is essential for the release of our minds for more important things. The illustration which I have drawn from mere changes in street addresses may be extended to our whole intellectual life and our system of ethics. A certain fluidity in habits is healthful. Too complete a breakdown of the habit-patterns may spell disaster.

Too violent a change in tempo and a too constantly changing environment tends also greatly to impair the power of concentration on which most of man's highest satisfactions and his chance of improvement depend. As we rise in the scale from the lowest forms of sensual to the highest spiritual and intellectual enjoyments, the need for concentration is correspondingly increased. I do not mean that sense enjoyments do not play a very important role in our life and mental health. They do. Our body also plays an essential one in permitting us to function at all as self-conscious beings, but the human race would not have advanced far had it never risen above the performance of mere bodily functions and the enjoyment of sensations, nor will either the individual or the race advance which retrogrades in the power of concentrated thought. It is impossible or very difficult for most people to concentrate and think except with a certain amount of leisure and freedom from intrusion, whether the intrusion be that of a visitor or a distracting sensation. If I may illustrate by my personal experience, I may say that I have, I believe, a fair power of concentration due in part to my having had to learn to work in all sorts of places and under all sorts of conditions. On the other hand, I am, I suppose, attuned to the rhythm of life of my earlier American days, a rhythm about like that of England to-day. In passing from the tempo of life there to America I am at once conscious of increasing difficulty in concentrating and of a marked difference in the kind and quality of my work, a difference which my publishers recognize as well. I

react at home to an incredible number of passing impressions but find it hard to sit quietly and ponder them over. In other words, a hailstorm of sensations—they may be merely noises—and an unaccustomed increase in the general tempo are likely to produce in most people the complex of what we call “the tired business man.” Losing the power of concentration in thought, we sink lower and lower to live our lives on the plane of sensation. Some change, as rest, is essential, and when by evening we are weary of the sensations to which we have been accustomed all day, there is nothing left to change to—in a life lived on the plane of sensation—but other sensations. Once we have made the simple division of sensations into agreeable and disagreeable the scale of value for them becomes purely quantitative, and we prefer the more intense to the less intense. The consequence is that such a life tends to become a mere search for more and more exciting sensations, undermining yet more our power of concentration in thought. Relief from fatigue and ennui is sought in mere excitation of our nerves, as in speeding cars or emotional movies.

Such a life tends to break down the individual personality, and merge all individuals in the mob. People are much alike in their primitive emotions, as they are in their bodily organs and functions. It is only when they rise into the realms of thought and will that they develop into marked individuals. A suddenly accelerated tempo thus has a strong tendency to lower the whole population to the level of the mob, and to melt down the variety of personalities into a gelatinous mass of humanity flavored with a few pungent sensations.

As I noted above with regard to habit, a certain fluidity is desirable so as to prevent our habit-patterns from attaining too great a rigidity, and our type of civilization from petrifying. A change in environment is also good in so far as it stirs, without breaking down, our power of thought and will. As I tried to show in an earlier article in *Harpers*, however, there is at work in nature a law of diminishing returns. This law indicates that all tendencies and forces operating on our human life,

although they may operate beneficially for a while, always attain to a point at which the returns begin to diminish, the benefit is lost, and the effect of operation may even become disastrous. At the present stage in our history we are faced by the very serious problem as to whether those forces which throughout man's career have been steadily increasing the rhythm or tempo of his life, and which have operated beneficially so far, have reached the point of the diminishing return.

There is no use closing our eyes to the possibility that this may be so. There is a good deal of evidence that maladjustment to the new tempo is reaching the point of possible breakdown. We may cite a few figures which indicate the effects of the altered rhythm on our nervous systems. The great increase of nervous disorders of all sorts is notable, but I have no statistics at hand for them as an entire group. We may note, however, that between 1920 and 1927 the deaths from heart disease per hundred thousand population in America, pre-eminently the land of hustle, increased steadily from 137 to 241. Both in England and America the increase in the ratios of insanity have long been alarming. It was estimated even before the War that if the steady rate of increase shown in England and Wales were maintained, the entire population would have become insane in two centuries more. In the United States between 1880 and 1923, the latest date I have, the number of patients in hospitals for mental disease tripled, rising, without break, from 81 to 245 per 100,000. The continuation of any such tendencies is appalling to contemplate. Between 1889 and 1927 the number of divorces per thousand marriages rose steadily from 60 to 160. In the large American cities to which the population drift is strongly marked, the rate of homicides rose from 3.4 in 1900 to 10.1 in 1927. New York, with a population of ten millions in the metropolitan area, is planning for a population of twenty millions within another generation. Within the past generation the figures indicating the instability of the home, the instability of man's mind, and those for the most serious crime against

his person have all tripled. Even making all allowances, we have here alarming evidence of increasing maladjustment to the new tempo of life. We might, without statistical help, pursue this maladjustment in its other effects, such as the enormous increase in the machinery of life, politically and economically, without corresponding increases in our ability to foresee, manage, and control, with a resultant increase in instability of the whole social structure. Or we might note the increase in mob spirit and mob influence, the increasing emergence of mob psychology as a determining factor in social life. But enough has been indicated to show the seriousness of the situation.

A friend of mine, a distinguished explorer and anthropologist, once spent a couple of years among the savages of the upper Amazon. On one occasion he was suddenly called out to civilization and, with the help of the chief and a train of attendants, he attempted a forced march of three days through the jungle to the nearest settlement. Without grumbling, the party made extraordinary speed for the first day and the second. On the third morning, however, when it was time to start my friend found all the natives sitting on their haunches, looking very solemn and making no preparation to leave. On asking the chief what the trouble was he received the answer, "They are waiting. They cannot move farther until their souls have caught up with their bodies." I can think of no better illustration of our own plight to-day. Is there any way of letting our souls, so to say, catch up again with our bodies, of attuning ourselves to the new tempo of life?

We certainly cannot do it as easily as the Amazonian savages. They could reduce the tempo by the simple process of sitting still. We cannot. As I have pointed out, the speeding-up process in human life appears to be imbedded in the universe. The "wave lengths" of our life have been steadily getting shorter, the rhythm faster, by a process over which we have no control. It has been going on for hundreds of thousands of years, with perhaps the four periods of marked acceleration to which I have called attention. Scientific discovery, whether

cause or effect of the latest acceleration in tempo, cannot be halted without a complete collapse of our civilization which is based upon it. We must now go on, seeking new inventions, new sources of power, or crash—a civilization in a nose dive. What, then, are the possibilities?

#### IV

There is, of course, the one that scientific discovery will cease to progress, that new discoveries will come less frequently, that we shall use up our present sources of power without discovering the new ones our captains of industry so confidently but ignorantly predict. That cure would, in the end, be almost worse than the disease. It would entail an almost unthinkable cataclysm.

The only hope would seem to lie in the possibility of our adjusting ourselves to the shorter wave length, the swifter tempo of our existence, as the race has in the past. It is possible that with each succeeding increase in tempo man's powers of adjustment have also been quickened, and that the sinister phenomena we see at present are merely the wreckage of a period of change. It is either that or, like a fly-wheel which turns faster and faster until it reaches the rate at which it breaks to pieces, human society and the human mind may also explode into bits.

If we are to become adjusted, it is evident that in some way we have got to order our lives differently. We have got to bring back, in the new, quickened tempo, some sense of leisure and secure for ourselves a respite from the hailstorm of sensation and need for constant adjustment, some new habit patterns, that will enable us to control ourselves nervously, to rise above the plane of sensation, and to concentrate on the things of the spirit. Only thus can we regain control of our individuality and our lives in the whirling flux into which we shall otherwise dissolve. This calls for an intelligent ordering of our existence,

for selection from among the goods of life, for the exercise of self-control—in a word, for intelligence and will

For thus I think we can look only, or mainly, to the younger generation among the privileged classes I use the whole phrase advisedly The older generation is too set in certain ways of living, in certain requirements of life, too involved in the whole economic system of creating new wants to make new business to make more money to supply all their old wants plus the new ones, to be of much assistance in the great adjustment that is ahead On the other hand, the lower or underprivileged classes (I use the term in no snobbish sense) are everywhere and in all countries too dazzled by their new toys and new power, too confused by their new wealth of sensation, too untrained in the higher values of life, to be of assistance either One need only watch the crowds on Broadway, the block-long queues waiting admission to the hundred cinemas of London, the aimless, shuffling masses nightly walking the Kulverstrat in Amsterdam, and similar crowds in every large city, to realize that if they revolt on finding their lives devoid of satisfaction it will be only to demand a yet greater share in the life of sensation

The hopeful point today is that the revolt of intelligent and trained youth is not for mere independence or for money-making but for a better ordering of their whole lives, for regaining in some way the chance to become fully rounded human beings and not mere cogs in a machine In many cases they think they are fighting the older generation What they are really fighting against is the time-spirit, the increased tempo of life The older generation has merely been mired in the historic process like antediluvian monsters that have floundered into an asphalt lake

The effort to reorganize life by selection and emphasis so as to regain leisure and personality and to rise above the mob-complex of sensation is a race between adjustment and collapse The life of the human spirit has been an amazing adventure from the start. Nobody knows why it has any place in the universe. Nobody knows what it is But it has been going on

for hundreds of thousands of years. It has been attacked by all sorts of forces, within and without humanity itself. So far it has won its battles, and it has always been led to victory by a select band. Speed and the power to give direction have been in the few, the weight of mass in the many. Both speed and mass are now colossal. If the balance can be maintained, all may yet be well, in spite of the quantitative increase in each. But if the few pass spiritually over to the many, only mass without direction will remain.

This has happened to too great an extent in our America in the past few generations. The few, like the many, have given themselves over to material goods and the pleasure of sensation. Abandoning themselves to the pursuit of rapid wealth, worshipping physical comfort and spurious luxury, overwhelmed by the multitude of distractions afforded by every new toy of science, they have tended to lose their sense of human values. It is precisely in the rejection by the younger generation of the standards of values of the older generation, in so far as those standards have debased human values, that I believe the hope of the world lies today. Mistakes will be made. They always have been by every generation, and the wine of the new freedom has been too strong for many a head. But if the younger generation—as the more intelligent among it seem determined to do—will re-establish a scale of human values and select from among the wealth of material provided for it those factors that alone conduce to the enjoyment of those values, even in the new tempo of life, leisure and deep satisfactions may again return for all, and mankind may once again have made its adjustment to the new rhythm forced upon it. With each change of tempo man's mind has become somewhat different, and has itself become quickened in proportion to the tempo. With each change the period allowed for readjustment becomes shorter, the rhythm vastly faster. The corners must be turned more and more quickly if the process continues. The plotting of the curve may before many generations be followed with tense nerves. Will the law of diminishing returns begin

to be felt in the law of increasing tempo? Or will the latter, like the former, at some point, as seems to be indicated, turn back upon itself? Have we attained that point already, or is the younger generation destined still to carry the line forward for a while?

Perhaps no greater crisis ever faced adventurous youth. Democracy may be a passing experiment in the struggle for happiness. It is at any rate a mere tool which may or not in the long run prove useful. It is not to make the world safe for that that the fight with the cosmic force of the time-spirit must be waged. It is for any continued possibility of sane, contented, rounded human lives for as many as may be who can learn to live them. If the intelligent youth of the new generation cannot make the needed adjustments, cannot create a new social life of human value within the rhythmic framework of the new tempo, democracy and all other catchwords of our day will signify as little as the last moaning of the wind when the ship has sunk below the waves.



## American Condescension and European Superiority<sup>1</sup>

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LEWIS MUMFORD

Lewis Mumford (1895- ), was associate editor of the *Fortnightly Dial*, and acting editor of the *Sociological Review*. He achieved renown as a lecturer on the "Development of American Culture" at the School of International Studies, Geneva, in 1925, and on "Sociology" in 1929. Among his better known books are *The Brown Decades*, *The Golden Day*, and *Herman Melville*.

FOR a century and a half Europe and America have been eyeing each other and endeavoring to find out wherein their likenesses and differences consist. A host of personalities, as different as Franklin and Crèvecoeur and Tocqueville and Dickens and Matthew Arnold and Waldo Frank have contributed to this discussion, and since the war, with the appearance of observers like André Siegfried, Lucien Romier, and Herman Keyserling, the literature on the subject has become vast, not to say flatulent.

It is doubtful if one can add any original data to a topic that has been so variously exhausted. Is it not rather time to step in and confront both groups with some of the facts they have missed, and so, temporarily, sum up this long strife of debate? The failure to come to any solid conclusions has been due to the fact that both the American in Europe and the European in America have been dealing largely with fantastic constructions which existed chiefly in the mind of the observer. In emphasizing these false stereotypes they have neglected the real individualities that lie behind them. If it is less

<sup>1</sup> From *Scribner's Magazine*. Reprinted with the kind permission of the author and Charles Scribner's Sons.

exciting to steer close to the coast-line of fact, it at least should have the charm of novelty, and when our imaginary differences sink, our real ones may significantly emerge, to our better common understanding

## II

Let us first examine what the European thinks of America. Suppose one is seated at a little sidewalk café in Geneva, that natural meeting-place of those who are concerned with international affairs. In the solitude of this quiet humdrum place, over a lazy glass of beer, one conjures up two or three absurd companions—a Frenchman, a German, an Englishman, let us say—whose notions about America compose into a single soliloquy. It would sound something like this:

Your America is a great country, but, unfortunately, the land itself is entirely without individuality. We have travelled through it in the winter, leaving New York late in the afternoon and arriving in Chicago twenty hours later, and, upon our honor, we have never seen outside Siberia such a vast monotonous stretch of steppes, unrelieved by mountain or hill or massed and spired city. It is no wonder that the cult of uniformity pervades your institutions—that must be the inevitable result of such a barren landscape, such a flat theatre of action. You even lack a name of your own: citizens of the United States, you call yourselves only Americans, as if that were not equally good for a Mexican or a Canadian, and not merely do you lack a name, but the fact that you are so largely descended from the original English stock, the fact that you speak the English language, puts you in the rank of colonials. An Englishman feels not that you are fully an American but that you are a little less than an Englishman.

You are a nation without a history, and you exult in that fact. Did not your great industrialist, Henry Ford, express your common sentiment in his historic confession of ignorance? You have sought to compensate for this by living in the future,

hence you are always in a feverish effort to catch up with yourselves, and by denying the past you lack that sense of cumulative effort which gives ground and bottom to every new achievement. With no secure tradition, it is obvious that you can have no culture: when your wealthy citizens wish to enjoy art or polite society they naturally come over to Europe, since your own country is in a state of relative barbarism, and except for Whistler and Sargent, whom we appreciate in Europe, you have never produced a great artist. In the drama you occasionally show us a talented actor, like Tom Mix, and Jack London and the author of "Tarzan of the Apes," whom we read with great avidity in France and Norway, are certainly writers of very nearly the first rank, while in philosophy we must acknowledge the extraordinary influence of that really fine mind, Ralph Waldo Trine, the author of a book which we translate into German as "Der Unsinn des Sterbens"—you of course have read it<sup>2</sup>—but beyond this bare handful of creative minds we have seen nothing of yours that we care for, nothing that has the true American spirit as we conceive it—a mixture of coarse strength and optimism and practical ingenuity.

Your greatest achievements, to be frank, have been in the realm of the practical, and here we are paralyzed by admiration, if we are not equally overcome by fear. Some of our architects, like Le Corbusier, Mendelsohn, and Gropius, have praised your grain elevators and your factories as the very pattern of elegance, and as the foundation of all future construction, and this corresponds with the predictions of our philosophical historian, Spengler, who had told us that finance and engineering, the control of the practical, must take the place that philosophy and lyric poetry and humanized architecture once occupied. We acknowledge your example, we are learning your lesson. Witness the Citroen sign which lights the highest structure in Paris. witness the cult of advertising in Germany, with its vast blocks of letters that shout like a loud-speaker in the ear of the passerby: we are all Americans now!

We admire your office furniture, your typewriters, your efficiency systems, and we cannot understand why you laugh at a Babbitt or seek to undermine the complacency of a Dods-worth, for these men are the true leaders and creators of the machine age. The lesson of Ford has become the very catechism of the modern business man. We visit your offices in New York as the pious Hindu visits the temples at Benares while we are sometimes a little dubious about the results, since there are some of us who feel that the old values of craft, industry, pure science, philosophy, cannot be embraced by finance and efficiency alone, we still envy them. Your leadership is undisputed. When one talks of the Americanization of Europe, as our German philosopher Muller-Freienfels does in "The Mysteries of the Soul," our feelings are plainly, as the psychologists would say, ambivalent: we praise that which we loathe and turn away from the creature we hasten to embrace. But in your country, despite this one pinnacle of achievement, all the things that Europe has valued, all the things that have given us our individuality, our soul, have disappeared—or have never existed.

### III

Our composite European has finished this harangue, and we are gathering our wits from reverie when an American tourist, who has sneaked away from his Cook's party in order to quench his thirst, sits down at the table. Let us listen to him.

He is sick of Europe, he tells us, and so many things make him sick. The food is always his first complaint: instead of being served the same nondescript menu, composed chiefly of calories and mineral salts, with no recognizable distinction in either the quality or the mode of preparation, he has been faced in his promiscuous travels with a succession of native dishes, which differ with the climate, the vegetation, the very history of the locality. Even the cheeses are varied, each region has its peculiar product to offer. He is sick of it. The multi-

plicity of flavors and styles upsets his stomach, and the multiplicity of languages upsets his mind, even though he makes no effort to master them

Europe is old, he says—old, shopworn, second-hand. The water-closets do not work, and even large cities do not boast Statler Hotels and servidors. His pilgrimage has been confined chiefly to castles and museums, and he thinks of Europe as a place where for thousands of years people have been killed, tortured, or subjected to the portrait painter. There are a few new things in Europe, but they exist side by side with the old, and insensibly become a part of it, as the latest shop-windows in the Rue Castiglione exist side by side with the arcades of the Rue de Rivoli, and Haussmann's Rue de Rivoli in turn falls in with the Louvre. Time stretches before and behind in Europe: the future is only half the length it is in America, because the tail of the past hangs on to it. Europeans are un-inventive, indifferent to progress, bound to tradition. There is no life there: the live ones have all gone to America. The roads ought to be widened and straightened, the timeclock ought to be introduced, bathtubs ought to be made compulsory by law, and the habit of taking two hours for lunch with one's family ought to be made a misdemeanor. What the old countries need is a dictator of the United States of Europe, who would combine the political strength of Cæsar with the practical sagacity of Henry Ford.

Our American forgets, of course, that Napoleon I made a pass at this very programme, and he would be nettled—nettled if not disgusted—by the reminder that modern industry, so far from standardizing Europe, has been accompanied during the last hundred years by the rise of nationalities and cultures which had hitherto been politically submerged—Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Provence, Brittany, Czecho-Slovakia, Catalonia, to mention no others.

Enough for our American's picture of a lazy, caste-bound, feudal Europe, inertly smothered in old customs. The very electric power-station he is staring at, while he drinks his beer,

grins contradiction at his dearest beliefs, but he passes by the power-station with a blind eye as he vainly tries to remember whether the prisoner of Chillon was a captive in Geneva, Berne, or Lucerne, and whether he had a lion or a bear to keep him company. In truth, the real Europe exists for the American behind a veil he himself carries over there, a veil composed in equal parts of Scott's "Ivanhoe," the scandalous memoirs of a petty European prince, the humorous observations of Mark Twain, and the general contempt he feels toward those unfortunate castes in America—a land proudly free of class distinctions—who are condemned to shine shoes, sell fruits, or wait upon tables. The art and culture and science that modern Europe has produced are for him dead, dead and unreal: a Delacroix, a Cézanne, a Matisse, a Brancusi are even more remote than Michelangelo and Raphael, while Clerk Maxwell and Hertz and Einstein do not hold a candle to the great American inventors who gave us the electric light and the audion tube.

#### IV

We have listened to these fantastic assumptions, these partial interpretations, these complacent exhibitions of arrogance quite long enough: it is time for us to answer them back, and to blow down such fabulous beliefs with a whiff or two of cold reality. And first let us turn to the European.

To do him justice, one must admit that our own countrymen are responsible for at least half the false statements and beliefs he has uttered. They have as grotesquely misinterpreted our development as the most prejudiced European observer, and, out of sheer ignorance or absence of mind, have permitted our real character to be obscured. Any one who has gone through the cities and countrysides of America in the daylight as well as by night, and in summer as well as winter, is aware that the notion that our country lacks physical individuality is a singularly inept one: we do not need a treatise on regional geography

like J Russell Smith's "North America" to remind us of this. But while the country was being settled the notion that republican institutions were the greatest blessing of life was dominant, and men traded beautiful landscapes for barren ones, and the gardened homesteads of New York and Pennsylvania for a row of dirty shacks, with a small sense of loss. The delight in regional individuality was called sectionalism after the Civil War and treated as a menace but no amount of mechanical standardization can obscure the differences that separate New England from New Mexico, Virginia from California, or Alabama from Minnesota. Real individuality may be helpfully abetted by self-consciousness: an Anderson, a Sandburg, a Frank Lloyd Wright may make manifest to the communities of the prairies the source and flavor and creative possibilities of their regional life, but it springs out of daily influences, the landscape, the climate, the racial and national traditions, which are effective even when they are unconscious.

Of this individuality we have had plenty in America, and so far from its disappearing the signs point rather to an increase. In the physical struggle and movement of the pioneer period, when the old patterns of life were breaking up, there was little opportunity for individual life to develop, and the newer parts of the country submitted to a low sort of standardization. It is, in fact, only since 1890 that a period of general settlement may be said to have begun: the recent appearance of such an excellent State history as that of Illinois exactly parallels the sort of self-consciousness that created the interesting town histories of early nineteenth-century New England, and in an historic, if not a literary, sense the author of the "Spoon River Anthology" is a Middle Western Hawthorne.

Our European who stops in the standardized hostelrys and the standardized metropolises is not aware of this growing individuality: so he places too much faith in the statistics of motor-car production and his own rapid impressions, and has no just notion of the quiet but effective work which is going on, for instance, in universities like Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Caro-

lma, Oklahoma, Michigan, New Mexico One of the tokens of this new individuality lies in the very changes in the language, subtly colored, as it is, not merely by local allusions and customs but by the influence of European languages other than English Contemporary literary names, like Mencken, Dreiser, Sandburg, Rolvaag, Ostenson, Rosenfeld, Kreymsborg, remind us of the fact that a good part of our population is not of English stock and feels no necessary affiliations with English literature

Indeed, as the nationalities which have been absorbed since 1850 get past the struggle of the first generation, with new customs and a new tongue, the contribution of other languages, and other modes of feeling and expression, will probably become even more vigorous, and the divergence from Colonial English more obvious We have partly absorbed the Indian in foods and place-names, and perhaps, as Mrs Mary Austin suggests, in our unconscious rhythms Mr Alfred Zimmern pointed out long ago how deliberately we impoverished ourselves by the doctrine of the melting-pot, which robbed the newcomer of his own individuality without giving him a fresh culture in anything but the externals of manners Now, however, that our regional cultures are beginning to emerge through the dull whitewash of political and industrial uniformity, it will be possible to encourage the existence of older cultural traditions, thus permitting their integration in a new America, instead of hastening their disuse and annihilation

The chief obstacle to this process has been our lack, not of history but of historic appreciation, which preserves the sense of continuity between men of succeeding generations and their institutions We have covered up this lack by overstressing the purely political aspects of our life and by giving to the Constitution and the Fathers of the Country a character so sacrosanct as to defy verbal alteration So far our European is right; and if this were all that constituted our history Mr Ford would have been right, too, when he characterized it as bunk As a matter of fact, the history of our country, the sum of sig-



nificant things that have been created or enacted here, is only just beginning to be written in literature, Mr Van Wyck Brooks and Mr Vernon Parrington and Mr Waldo Frank, in history proper, Mr Frederick Turner, Mr Samuel Eliot Morrison, Mr and Mrs Charles Beard, and a whole group of assiduous scholars, have only recently begun to bring to light our real past as distinguished from an iconography of political documents and a hagiography of mouldy saints

Our mediæval architecture, the New England village, the clipper ship, the whaler, the covered wagon, the frontier, the great writers who clustered around Emerson, the great engineers and architects, Eads, Roebling, Richardson, Sullivan, Root, Charles Eliot, Jr —these and a hundred other items of our past and our living present are just beginning to be taken in by us Much remains to explore Extraordinary minds, like Hegel's pupil, John Roebling, the designer of the Brooklyn Bridge, are still without a biography, and our most original philosopher, Charles Peirce, waited long for the collection of his published papers, to say nothing of his note-books Only lately have we begun to discover Thoreau the moralist as distinguished from Thoreau the writer on Nature, or Melville the epic poet as well as Melville the writer of adventure yarns, and so young is our tradition that but a few minds have as yet dared to accept it in its entirety, recognizing the connection between Emerson and George Woodberry and Paul Elmer More and John Jay Chapman, between Hawthorne and Henry James and Howells, between Thoreau and Robert Frost, Whitman and Jeffers, Poe and Wallace Stevens, or between Artemus Ward and Mark Twain and Finley Peter Dunne and Ring Lardner It is not the poverty of American thought so much as the absence of our own self-respect that has made the European confine his notions of our literature to such motley representatives as Longfellow, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Jack London, and Upton Sinclair

One need say little about the monuments we are uncovering, as we find them in the carpentry of the eighteenth-century

house, and the bedspreads and hooked rugs of the early nineteenth-century farm, in the genuine primitives of the itinerant portrait-painter or the racy wood-engravings of the early magazine artists, in the railroad stations of Richardson, the office buildings of Louis Sullivan and John Root and the dwelling houses of Frank Lloyd Wright, to say nothing of the work of anonymous engineers, all of whom laid the foundation for the modern movement in European, if not in American, architecture. Scattered and isolated though these examples may be, they nevertheless give a new color to a past that has hitherto been painted in the purely subjective gray of Puritanism or the smutty black of industrialism. One may say, without paradox, that our past still lies ahead of us, and the more we recover it the more deeply conscious we will be of an individuality which does not rest solely upon our pre-eminence in financial organization and industrial activity. The existence of a painter like Ryder reinforces our faith in a Marin today, the work of an Eakins brings closer a contemporary like Thomas Benton, for a genuine tradition does not stifle but reinforces our interest in the present, and makes it easier to assimilate what is fresh and original. Has not the establishment of this essential continuity been perhaps the most important contribution of the last fifteen years in criticism? Seeking, in Mr. Van Wyck Brooks's phrase, for a usable past, we are surprised not by its existence but its richness.

When one turns to that part of our life which the European regards with such uneasy admiration—our mass production, our card indexes, the cult of advertising, the worship of efficiency—one is conscious, as an American, of two elements which are usually left out of account. One of them is the fact that, due to an original scarcity of hands, we have gone farther than any other civilization in doing away with degrading menial labor. Neither card indexes nor mass production has been responsible for this, for a good part of our mass production is devoted to articles, like fashionable clothes, which actually increase rather than diminish the item of labor, but

the fact itself exists, hand in hand with a certain habit of self-help, independence, willingness to face the whole round of life. This flexibility of function and desire to master the material conditions of existence derive directly, I think, from our pioneering past, and antedate mass production by at least a century.

Europe has always had a stable working class to stand between well-bred and cultivated people and these realities. While we have not entirely done away with this class, we have to a considerable degree transferred its functions to machines, and the menials that remain have an independence and self-respect one does not meet in Europe except in Switzerland, or, according to good report, in the Scandinavian countries. Ferrero was shocked, half a generation ago, when he found that the wife of an American intellectual cooked the dinner that was served him, but, from a thoroughly humane point of view, his reaction was even more shocking. The simple bedroom, the self-service, the willingness to do "bread labor," the achievement of which was such an heroic task for Tolstoi, is not unknown in America even among the rich, and among the middle classes, especially in the small towns and the countryside, it is of course a commonplace. Aristotle said that if the shuttle could weave by itself and the plectrum play on the lyre, chief workmen would not need helpers nor civilization slaves. We have not yet abolished slavery, but as a civilization we have taken a deliberate step in that direction.

The other interesting fact about our material standards is that while the European is worshipping at the shrine of Taylor, Ford, and company, it is among our own scholars and men of letters that the real dangers of this civilization and its underlying weaknesses have been most keenly assessed, most drastically criticised. Just because we have gone farther in the matter of mechanical technic than most of our European rivals, we have been able better to see the inherent weaknesses of a régime which devotes itself wholly to producing certain flimsy end-products and thrusting them upon the market, without

regard for what happens to the worker, or what the total result is upon society at large. The late Thorstein Veblen and, after him, Mr. Stuart Chase have pointed out the gross inefficiencies that take place in the whole order of industrial production—inefficiencies due to the irregularity of markets, the misdirection of energies, and the instability and falsity of current standards of consumption, which are based upon manufactured pecuniary “needs” and not upon vital wants. A whole series of writers, Sinclair Lewis, Waldo Frank, Upton Sinclair, Ring Lardner—almost all, be it noted, popular writers—have written parables about the ineptitude of concentrating upon practical affairs alone the passion which should be spread over the totality of life, over love and art and animal joy and the idealities.

While Spengler tells his European contemporaries to devote themselves to finance and technic, our masters of business, our Fords and Rockefellers, with a sentiment that does credit to their hearts if not to their minds, proclaim by every gesture of their uneasy souls that business is not enough, and belatedly they seek to preserve, in wax if not in flesh, the memory of the very rural culture they have, by their ruthless concentration upon the machine process alone, demolished! It is not without significance that Babbitt the booster, in Mr. Lewis’s recent novel, became the somewhat deprecatory Dodsworth, who stands aside from his business preoccupations for a considerable time and tortures himself with reverie and thought. Having made industry an “end-in-itself” for at least a century, we have awakened during the present generation to realize that it is only a subsidiary function of life, and that when it predominates over every other function, it is a sign of cultural emptiness, if not actually of personal neurosis.

In short, we are through with pioneering, the period of preparation, and we are entering upon a period of fulfilment. Those who fear the “Americanization” of the world judge us by the shallow self-confidence and vaingloriousness of our past. But look at our literature! That note is only a hang-

over there, an echo in the minds of the vulgar. In America all things flow, and the least reliable way of gauging our future is by examining the contents of our past. Our very lack of tradition, which has prevented us from building upon our successes, also keeps us from stewing so long in our errors. Give us another thirty years of self-examination and readjustment and America may be the last place in which to find "Americanism." It is far more likely that the cult will survive in Italy, Russia, or China.

## V

Our American's complaint against Europe is the obverse of the European's praise of America. He has an unreasoning dread of individuality, of nuance, a dread which was partly a self-protective one in the pioneer who never sufficiently identified himself with a particular landscape, a particular way of life, to become thoroughly a part of it. Just because the American community was originally composed of dissident religions, creeds, nationalities, political beliefs, the pioneer placed an excessive value upon external similarities; hence, when his descendant visits Europe he is irritated by the variety of individualities that greets him at every turn.

Doubtless, these differences in Europe, like the political frontiers, make life harder for the traveller, but by what canon of reason or faith should the life of the community be adjusted to the convenience of those who do not share its existence permanently? It is just because superficial movement over the skin of the planet has become easy that men must preserve all the more zealously those flavors of a community which evaporate with distance and constant handling. It is not the regionalism of Provence or the intense localism of a little Swiss canton that causes international misunderstandings and war; our gross brutal antagonisms are caused by just the opposite process, by the imperialism which attempts to inflict an alien culture upon a local community, as the Italians are

doing in the Austrian Alps, as the Americans have done with the Indian, or which reaches out for the exclusive possession of territories, resources, and markets, and comes into conflict with other states expanding obstreperously in the same manner. True individuality creates that deep self-respect which works against mean conquests and exploitations, and when August Comte looked forward to the creation of a hundred and sixty separate regional unities in the future Europe he was anticipating a period, not of war, but of progressive federalization and harmony, since no culture, however individual, can be self-subsistent.

What is inimical to both peace and culture is the notion that any one individuality is capable of supplanting or doing away with the necessity for others. The American who thinks that people are, after all, just the "same" the world over is assuming, secretly, that they are all Americans, and he is at a loss when he runs up against a set of assumptions, a habit of mind, an outlook on life totally different from his own. Any peace between communities which was achieved by the suppression of individuality would be a form of death. On the contrary, what is needed for permanent peace is the fundamental assumption that individuality is a value, a value that cannot be suppressed, and that the harmonious interplay between the cultures of the world can take place, along with the necessary measures of practical cooperation, only when the fear of being aggressively absorbed or assimilated has been done away with.

The notion that the world would be enriched by a process of superficial "Americanization," by spreading the same practices in education, the same literature, the same language, the same breakfast foods throughout the planet is an idle one. There is a certain intimate complex of cities and landscapes and institutions that is as necessary for a community's full development as the special partnership of atmosphere, soils, bacteria, insects, birds, and other plants which supports the existence of a botanical species, and there is no patent sub-

stitute for this stable synthesis The American who rebels against the regional cultures of Europe is rebelling against a chief source of Europe's strength As our own country settles down and develops we will, no matter how thick the spread of highways and radio stations and power lines, become more and more conscious of the essential differences, sometimes obvious, sometimes subtle and delicate, between one region and another If the American would take this lesson back from Europe he could well leave behind the panelled interiors and the religious icons he so zealously loots and transports, for he would have within his own soul part of that precious essence out of which such works of art were originally created

## VI

It is this hold upon communal individuality which has enabled certain parts of Europe to adopt the efficiencies of modern industrialism without being altogether overwhelmed by its barbarism One grants that the effort has not always been successful in the poorly settled parts of Europe, as in the English Midlands, for example, where the remains of an old culture were very thin, the process had the same brutality it exhibited in, say, Pittsburgh or Chicago, but there are other countries, like Switzerland or Holland or Sweden, where the new and the old have been admirably combined The American who buries his head in old castles ignores that fact in the art of building cities, from ancient mediæval ones down to the latest garden city at Welwyn, England, it is the European and not the American who has constantly led. He forgets that even for traffic Paris beats Chicago, that in the matter of parks London led the way for Boston, that the Eiffel Tower scrapped the skies long before the Woolworth Building, that the docks of Hamburg put to shame all our Atlantic ports, and that the new workers' housing in Amsterdam or London or Vienna or Berlin leaves our "prosperous" municipalities ridic-

ulously in the rear, stewing helplessly in slums they have neither the initiative to demolish nor the power to replace. While it is only belatedly that the American skyscraper has sloughed off its fatuous antique decorations, it is to Europe that we must turn for ringing examples of modern architecture, in Hilversum, Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Berlin—examples which, to our shame be it said, owe not a little to the initiatives of our own pioneers.

For leadership in painting, we must turn to the country that produced Cézanne, and for initiative and daring in thought we have only a handful of names, like those of Willard Gibbs and Charles Peirce, to put alongside the great galaxy Europe produced during the last century, and, as an Einstein, a Freud, a Whitehead, a Geddes, a Haldane, show, is still producing. A civilization which can out of its orthodox creeds produce a Spinoza or a Kant, out of the strict alignment of its social classes a Faraday or a Napoleon, is, one need hardly say, neither moribund nor decrepit nor hopelessly caked in stale ritual. Surpassed in one department of the practical life or another by the temporary ascendancy of some mechanical dodge we have perfected, like the chain production of cheap motors, Europe has in her culture reserves of power and energy that are illimitable, because they are based upon the work of prime movers, like the poet, the philosopher, the pure scientist, rather than upon derivative transmitting mechanisms like the technician and the business man. Even invention, even technic, cannot, as the most eminent of our engineers has reminded us, exist or continue to improve without support from basic activities which are entirely free from any immediate practical application. The respect for the thinker is fortunately still a mark of the European mind, and as long as this respect remains pervasive, Europe need not fear American competition. Until America more fully absorbs that lesson from Europe, or until Europe herself forgets it, all our chance advantages of men or resources or money will only be passing ones.



## Experience and Other Guides<sup>1</sup>

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A G KELLER

A G Keller (1874- ) received his bachelor's and doctor's degrees from Yale University Since 1907 he has been Professor of the Science of Society in the same institution He has written *Out of Mankind's Experience*, and *Man's Rough Road*

IF HUMAN history is a tangled drama, its plot, at least, is simple "Man faces The Awkward Situation" The cave-dweller rounds a corner and runs into a saber-toothed tiger, the modern nation encounters the liquor issue as a lion in its path And the first line of man's speaking part has always been

Man (anxiously) "Now what to do?"

Men have wanted to be told what to *do*—not what to think Later, perhaps, what to think, if there is time Thinking is hard, especially when weary with the day's work, it is thankfully turned over to someone else Men have wanted only to be happy, in a simple, human way, always they have prayed for health, food enough, and offspring They have ever been willing to fall in behind any guide who proclaimed impressively enough that he could lead them to their hearts' desire, and glad to pay him liberally for his services Under the circumstances there has been no lack of seers who, overcoming a shrinking modesty, have made known their competence to size up any and all situations and to lead unerringly away from mischance toward security

The guide most favored by mankind has been the medicine-

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man, or priest, reputed to have direct access to divine wisdom, and in his wake came along presently the philosopher who, sinking a shaft into his own mighty mind, and prospecting and introspecting through its darksome galleries, emerged with Absolutes infallible to the good life Truth, Beauty, Duty, Faith, Loyalty The philosopher has never seriously crowded his predecessor in popularity, because he could never tell people, in a few plain, loud words, what to *do* Besides, philosophers have talked a mysterious jargon and each has contradicted the other When the old-time priest rumbled out of his beard "Thus saith the Lord! Fetch a goat!" that was something any clod could understand and carry in mind He hurried off to get the goat The Unapproachable One was going to descend from on high and graciously eat that goat, after delightedly snuffing its burning fat All perfectly lucid and natural But when a perplexed soul is told "Be thou loyal to Loyalty!" he goes away feeling much as if he had been fed on shadow-broth If he can, he sticks to the elder, lusty, hearty, comprehensible gods, if not, he makes the best of his confusion and resigns himself to meeting his fate under his own steam, and as it comes, instead of hoping to be told how to head off calamity as a whole and at its source

This is where many a man finds himself today at sea, muddling through confusion on his own because he can no longer trust the guidance to which, through the ages, the race has been willing to commit its destiny Nevertheless, we have not lost our desire for safe-conduct, we are ready to drop the ladder for any pilot who can produce what look like credentials Torn at by winds of doctrine, with a compass that whirls instead of pointing and the sound of breakers on a lee shore not so far off in the fog, we want our bearings, at the least we need a firm holding-ground for our anchors, such as they are, until the gale shall, perchance, blow itself out We hang on somehow, meeting situations as they rise with what common sense we have, and trying to believe that "this too will pass" Such an attitude may not be heroic, but it is not

ignoble, and, in the collapse of faith in Jupiters and Absolutes, it has its possibilities

What we need, even when we are not hopelessly at sea, to give us more of that confidence, the absence of which our "best minds" so bemoan, is the realization that a guide, not at all new in the world, one who, though unrecognized has led us many times through the dark, is still at our disposal. He is no puffy drum major, to marshal us grandly along, his eyes uplifted toward the airy whirlings of his glittering baton, his empty face a rapture of self-importance, he is an unpretentious, rough-clad figure whose moccasined heels do not clatter, who offers no swelling promises, who has often, we repeat, guided us safely when we did not know it, and who has been set aside, over and over again, in favor of his showy competitors. He is not Authority, claiming divine right. He is the common, every-day Experience of Mankind.

The man who asks only to go quietly about his own business is now being bedeviled by excited seers who screech contradictory messages into his ear. He is being pulled about, jostled, and his toes trodden upon. Those in front drag him away from all that he has believed. The faith as delivered to the saints, they bellow, is no more than an opiate used by capitalistic thieves to drug their victims into a state where they can be robbed with ease. Patriotism is childish: the country's economic life is vilely lived, democracy is a paltry show, government is a medley of sordid wranglings over personal and sectional favors, law, where not oppressive, is futile. Marriage and the family are shackles for the spiritless. What used to be called decency and self-respecting reticence is no more than a prudery that cloaks suppressed desire. Freud says so. It is the desire, not its control, that is godlike. We have imagined ourselves happy when we have been no more than brethren to the ox, with not enough spirit to toss someone on our horns. Ploddingly we have gone about what we have taken to be our duties, when we should have been bawling for our inalienable rights. "Forward!"

Then there are the back-pullers Their hero is the brakeman Out to stop all this mania for change, these shepherds reach out their crooks to hook us back into the good old highway One is to be saved according to their revelation, if they have to twist his neck off to do it They know right from wrong—do they not know their ideas from those of others? They do not like doubters Skepticism is to them always a bad symptom They never doubt, for they have the big medicine, and know it “Back!” they cry, “Back to Authority!”

These sets of guides agree on one point only that there is something wrong There always is some kind of suspicious scent lingering about, to be picked up by those who have a nose for odors and suggested to duller nostrils Both sides point passionately to the late War and its consequences—namely, everything unpleasant that has happened since—as a dire example, and he whom they are exhorting has his memories He was on that 1914 train that hurtled down a poorly ballasted incline, with brakes shrieking and smoking but not taking hold He was there when, on its outer wheels, it jarred around a suddenly appearing curve, injuring all its trustful passengers and whirling several millions of them off into eternity He wonders uneasily whether there may not be another corner to get past, farther on And they tell him that the engineers now in the cab are unfit to run a hand car Shall he join in a raid on the engine, to throw them out? Shall he sit still? Shall he pray?

Plenty of us have been losing patience with the way things are run in the world A modern anti-God campaign may be no more than a kind of fist-brandishing in front of Headquarters, but there are any number of scarcely less ambitious protests against things as they are We distrust them—once burned by theory, we are twice shy, “the economy of belief which wisdom practices forbids us to embrace fanciful theories where commonly observed facts will serve our turn” Have we any factual bearings whatever to go by? Have men ever faced such a situation before? It looks unprecedented, but may not

be In the absence or breakdown of grand general principles such as the brotherliness of mankind, why not ask, prosaically, what other people have done under similar circumstances? Common sense suggests a dip into the experience of those who have gone before—not into what they thought or what they intended, but into what they did, and how it came out No one who has lost his belief in miracles wants to throw all past experience overboard Wisdom “is but the distillation of experience”

If, choosing the unpretentious, homespun guide, we follow him in an exploratory excursion through history, we find occasions enough where our flustered ancestors flew to empty hopes or fell into despairs now seen to have been uncalled for The ways of the past have always been challenged, and it is good that they were, else stagnation would have prevailed When men are content to do just as their fathers did, they merely repeat the past, errors and all, because it is easier to imitate than to discriminate Deference to Authority is not the same as deference to Experience In every age, too, there has been resistance to change, and this also is well, for it has been resistance to change, and thus also is well, for it has prevented reckless abandonment of hard-won advantages Traditions are always falling out of adjustment to the ever-changing conditions of society's life They become out of date On the other hand, they do not lose all their virtue overnight The past may be a sodden, inelastic clod, it can be a springy take-off

There is not much use, however, in seeking to view mankind's experience except over a long perspective Seen close up, small things look big and the big may not be seen at all To the swimmer in rough water—and we all seem to be afloat in a choppy sea—the mere ruffles on the crest or flanks of shouldering Atlantic swells look formidable enough He may sense something in the surges' lift, as he feels himself go up and down, but, as a mere chip on their tide, he can know little of their origin, nature, and long rhythm It is the same with the tides in the affairs of men Only the student of long

stretches of mankind's experience can get his eye upon the constancy of long-lived institutions, such as religion and marriage, and upon their development through the vast reaches of the past, then he feels less uneasy about their local phases, and is not so ready to judge their present or to predict their future offhand "The truth is this The march of Providence is so slow and our desires so impatient, the work of progress is so immense and our means of aiding it so feeble, the life of humanity is so long, that of the individual so brief, that we often see only the ebb of the advancing wave and are thus discouraged It is history that teaches to hope"

Change is proposed There is nothing against change, in itself But how have changes come about, hitherto? Have they brought up solid against any limit to extent and velocity? In short, judging by the race's experience, what can, and what cannot, be done with society and its institutions? It is the part of discretion to get light upon such questions before digging up the hatchet and, with bloodcurdling yells, plunging into the war-path

In the long perspective of human experience (of which the few thousand years of recorded history are but a trifling fraction), men's local doubts and fears, hopes, purposes, and programs look much less consequential than they did, or do, to those involved in them Individuals, even prophets and heroes, dwindle in statue toward the vanishing-point, and only masses of men and their mass-action remain within the field of vision "Man, the Master" looks less imposing as the perspective lengthens—a fact as true as it may be depressing For romance, catering to human vanity, has cast man for a majestic rôle in the Scheme of Things It has pictured the cosmos hushed, quivering with excitement, worshipful, as the appointed hour drew nigh for him to disclose himself and take command Generations have been reared upon such mythology There was indeed a sort of reception committee (red of tooth and claw) to wait upon man when he appeared—yes, carnivorously watering at the mouth with eagerness to welcome him into

their midst, but, judging by the fact that he has left descendants, he must have dodged the committee. If there was a "banquet of life," he did not attend.

In truth, the world was getting along well enough before man came. It did not need him. Tides swelled and ebbcd, storm relaxed into calm, generations of living things were born, mated, and died, without any thought of him. Unostentatiously slipping into a corner of the picture, he throve there as he was able to keep out of the way of destructive forces that surrounded him. He was like a person in a dark room criss-crossed by live wires, he could not wade through them, to live on, he had to identify them, learn their location, and adjust himself accordingly.

That is what, for all his attitudinizing, he has been doing ever since—adjusting himself in the light of knowledge wrung out of experience, learning the ways of Nature and conforming to them. He has not been able to change them by the minutest jot, any more than to create even an atom of matter. Only Joshua ever interfered with the schedule of the sun. Two and two have persisted in making four, though it has often been to man's interest that they should foot up to three or five, and he has tried hard to persuade himself and others that they do. In the main, man's exploits have been confined to moving things about a little, into or out of the way of forces completely indifferent to his desires, thus he has brought fire, coal, water, and iron together in an engine-room, and then let them do what was in them to do. Having discovered that Nature, though not a benign grandmother, has set ways whose regularity can be counted upon, he has had sense enough to fall in with them or even to utilize them to his profit. Thus he has come to seem, to himself, the Lord of Nature, which has exhilarated him into flights of rhapsody over his own grandeur.

Such romantic myth-making, not being recognized as such, befools insight. The truth is that man's escapes and his conquests have always been due, not to his sovereignty, but to his

adeptness in adjusting himself to conditions of life that have been fixed, once and for all. He wins by yielding. It has never been safe to do otherwise than adjust.

All living beings, man included, must either adapt themselves to their life-conditions or perish. Plants grow stiff stocks, animals put on layers of fat or develop instincts. Men, too, though remaining subject to physical alteration without the taking of thought, nevertheless have had for long ages their own special way of adjusting. They have done it mainly through a single organ, the brain, and their adjustments, instead of being those of the flesh, are detachable parts of themselves: material things, such as clothing, shelter, weapons, tools, and vehicles, and even non-material things, such as economic methods and systems, property, government, the family, and religion.

A coat of fur is for an animal a physical adjustment, man takes it off the animal and wraps it about himself, then he has made his mental adjustment against the cold. A harder fist at the end of a longer arm would help him out, so he fastens a sharp stone to the end of a stout stick and has what he needs. As for the non-material adjustments, division of labor is an instrument in living quite as effective as a new tool, magical devices, as well as superior weapons, give battling men a confidence that begets victory, a system of inheritance of property makes for that internal peace and order under which alone society can persist. A fish could about as well get along without fins as a society without the institution of marriage.

The experience of mankind has been gathered while working out these adjustments. To understand their nature and trace their course is to make use of that experience.

The way to get at the nature of an institution, as of anything else that is alive, is to see how it has grown. The biologist is not content with mere dissection, to take a once-living thing to pieces is something, but not nearly all, he wants to know how an organism has *become*, not alone what it *is*, otherwise



he has an incomplete understanding of it. The more so with an institution which rises out of the long experience of the race, like religion or the family. When we know how institutions have come to be what they are, we shall have valuable information as to the expediency of discarding, retaining, or modifying them—knowledge which might even decide us as to the advisability of joining in a raid on the engineers, or sitting prayerfully still in our seats, or pulling the bell-rope with a view to stopping for an investigation.

## But Is It Art?<sup>1</sup>

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WILLIAM ORTON

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THE question has been asked before. Years and years ago, when Mary Pickford was just Gladys Smith and the prince of pantomime was "doing" the London halls with Fred Karno, D. W. Griffith was thinking it over, hopefully. And certainly there have been movies, now and then, that deserved an affirmative answer. But technique has never yet stood still long enough to get the question finally disposed of. Now we have sound,—such lots of it!—with color on the way. Mass entertainment becomes more massive, its finances more gigantic, its publicity machine more formidable, day by day. Radio, linked up with the movies and what is left of vaudeville, has now captured almost the entire concert management business, and here is the R. C. A.-Rockefeller combination building what it calls "a city of art, a city of artists and educators, whose lives are devoted solely to producing æsthetic enjoyment, entertainment, and education to all the people on a national or even world-wide scale. It seems almost like the impossible dream of art enthusiasts through the centuries suddenly come to life." Almost—but not quite. The question still is open. Is it art?

Who cares? I do. And who am I? I am one of many thousands of people—thousands, mark you, Mr. Movie Producer.

<sup>1</sup> From *The Atlantic Monthly*. Reprinted with the kind permission of the author and The Atlantic Monthly Company.

(though I suppose mere thousands are nothing to you)—who have learned somehow to know good from bad, true from false, in more things than clothes, food, and tobacco. You will find us everywhere—from college classrooms and faculty clubs to the fur trades, the hat trades, the needle trades, of New York, Rochester, Chicago, Cincinnati, and points west.

I admit you have the aces—as a class, we are not rich, but other trades than yours find us worth cultivating. We buy a good many books, and keep a steady pressure on the libraries for those we can't afford. We fill the cheaper seats wherever good drama is showing or good music is being played, and if ever you have municipal opera in New York, we are the people who will most steadily (and critically) support it. Go to the Stadium concerts or the Metropolitan gallery if you don't believe me.

As a class, we are not highbrow. We are not socially important enough to make discrimination a disguise for snobbery. We read detective tales by the bushel (and how we have jacked up their quality, by the way!) along with Thomas Mann and Artsibashev, we like our Amos 'n' Andy, know real jazz from imitation, and visit the Burlesque on a bellyful of beer and sauerkraut when we can get it. I think you would feel at home with us, Mr. Movie Producer—or you would have done so ten years ago, before you took yourself and your bank account so seriously. For what we want is not so much the æsthetic—that term has an anæmic sound to modern ears—as the real, the significant, the vital. And to us most of what you offer is as dead as last Sunday's mutton.

Perhaps that is as good a working definition of art, for this day and age, as one could get—the real, the significant, the vital. But it puts you, Mr. Producer, in a rather difficult position. For here you are with a technique—a very skillful technique—that is essentially, in your view, a reproduction, and how can any mere reproduction, no matter how good, be made to fit within that definition? The painter does not “reproduce” a landscape, nor the poet a slice of experience. But movie

technique in America seems determined to become an imitation of an imitation, a reproduction of a reproduction. As such, I am willing to grant, it may have a quite legitimate function. It can supplement the newspaper with the news reel,—the one makes about as much appeal to thought as the other,—and it can disseminate over a very wide field some knowledge of successful stage plays. That is something.

But it is not enough. Even from the box-office point of view, it is not enough. There is a considerable section of the public that demands more—demands, in fact, that the cinema move toward the status of an independent art in America as it is doing elsewhere. In order to achieve that status, begin that movement, cinema must fulfill the prerequisite that applies to all art in any medium whatever: namely, *the discovery of something to say, and a way of saying it, uniquely fitted to the particular means of expression*. The rule holds good without exception for any technique whatsoever—from soap in sculpture to Wilfrid Thomas and his color-organ or Stravinsky and the ballet.

In the light of that criterion, the basic trouble with American cinema is that it has nothing to say. And having evolved no vision of its own, suited to its own unique potentialities, it goes shopping around for things to say that have already been said in other techniques. Sometimes—as in *Holiday*, *Street Scene*, and *Five Star Final*—it succeeds in saying them over again extremely well. But hardly ever does it put its resources to work on genuine movie material. It was learning to do so, with encouraging results, up to about four years ago. But then came sound, and set it back almost where it had started.

The development of the silent pictures in eliminating the tedious and ridiculous captions and telling a true story of movement in direct and often beautiful picturization was full of promise. Chaplin and Fairbanks had brought their technique to a point at which it really became an art form. *The Thief of Bagdad* may well have recalled to theatregoers the thrill that swept over London twenty years ago when Reinhardt brought

Sumurun to the Coliseum, with the inimitable Constantin And then King Vidor, in *The Crowd*, fulfilled—though in a very different fashion—Griffith's early dream of the mass drama, fulfilled it, despite the frequent false notes, in a fashion that can stand beside the best of Ufa or Sovkino and will probably remain unequalled in America for decades

But the accession of sound set the whole industry back upon the wrong road—the road of imitation Drama never got anywhere along that road, and neither—as an art—will the movie The more it succeeds, the more it will fail

When one sees a play one is never, one is not supposed to be, unaware that it is a play It enacts itself under certain well-understood conditions, conventions, and limitations, out of which—out of these very conventions and limitations—the dramatist builds his art form But the movie has no such accepted conventions and limitations save the one of black and white which it is trying hard to abolish A movie kiss may not be immoral, but is nearly always offensive It is more offensive than a stage kiss, since we are never in danger of forgetting that the stage kiss is stage, whereas the movie is always trying to make us forget that it is movie It tries all the time to persuade us that it is life, to palm itself off as a slice of reality Sound, as Hollywood uses sound, has encouraged it in this meretricious endeavor, with the result that a technical innovation of great importance has actually proved an impediment to the development of a genuine art

## II

Here we have a special case of a general and very interesting problem—the relation of technique to art in an age of applied science In the thirteenth century there was no such problem—for the simple reason that technique was almost entirely manual *The same disciplines which led to mastery of technique led also in the direction of what technique was for* We do not find competent technique along with base

design or ignoble aim, because training in workmanship was also, in the nature of the case, training in art. The master craftsman was not "at a loose end" in the use of his craft, for, though it would be too much to say that even then technique and purpose were the same thing, they grew together out of the same stem and flowered together in execution and intention. The social pattern of work organization reflected the integration of process, product, and purpose.

It was true then, as it has always been, that great achievements need the support of accumulated wealth, workmen must be fed, housed, and cared for while their product is far in the future—whether or not that product is ultimately to be the means of taking back from the community more than was advanced to the workpeople. But the accumulated wealth which sustained the workpeople in the great ages of art was not seeking returns of a financial nature, and from that fact the workpeople derived an advantage largely denied to workpeople of to-day. The patronage which sustained them stood for an idea with which they could do something, instead of an idea with which they can do nothing—a purpose which enlisted their allegiance to a degree far beyond that which terminates with the pay envelope. It is no doubt well-intentioned of Mr. Smith to exhibit the portraits of the steel workers at the entrances of the Empire State Building, but neither publicity nor the size of the pay envelope can compare as an incentive with that mediæval idealism which tapped the vein of power at so much deeper a level. The struggle of a modern corporation to earn its dividends does not provide the artists in its service with "something to say" in the sense in which the nature of their enterprise furnished an æsthetic programme to the mediæval craftsmen.

Similarly, among the workpeople themselves, the social pattern—based, when you come to think of it, on the fact that technique was manual—afforded safeguards for art itself that later disappeared. It is true that guild organization was eventually subverted by wealth and nepotism to a point at which

it had to die a violent death. But in its proper time that organization reflected the characteristic fact of mediæval production—the fact that the same disciplines which led to mastery of technique led also in the direction of what technique was for. “I cannot help believing,” says Mr G G Coulton, in his *Art and the Reformation*, “that the generality of men were no more artistic then than they are now, and that, if they did not show the frequent modern preference for thoroughly bad art, it was because there was no thoroughly bad art for them to choose. The apprenticeship and guild system, which hindered the highest flights of all, rendered impossible the vilest lapses.” If we look at the matter from a contemporary standpoint, that, after all, appears more than a little!

Our modern problem arises with the application of large-scale methods of production of all sorts, and especially with the coming in of the new spirit by which those methods were encouraged and directed—the spirit which Catholics ascribe to the Reformation, and Protestants to the Renaissance. Whether that spirit widened the economic gulf between rich and poor is debatable. There was certainly no innovation about the fact that it was still concentrated wealth that provided the chief opportunities for art. But there was novelty in the means by which wealth might be concentrated. There was, above all, novelty in the preposterous doctrine that the employment of wealth simply to produce more wealth constituted virtue before God and man. Contentious as might be the theology of the Incarnation, art had found centuries of inspiration in the idea of the Nativity. It could do nothing with Benjamin Franklin’s idea of “money begetting money.” The new idea has become just as universal as the old, it happens to be an idea that is no good to the artist. Why is it no good to the artist? Because, philosophically considered, it has no meaning.

But in compensation for this loss of catholicity in its message, it is sometimes said art has been “socialized” through the reproductive power of machinery. The fallacy is tempting, but

patent The fact that machine technique turns out tons or thousands where manual technique could produce only pounds or dozens does not mean that art is being socialized For art lives in men's minds, or nowhere, and you cannot make good the impairment of men's minds by surrounding them with larger quantities of things Any bit of Gothic carving, poor and unique though it be, represents a more truly socialized art than a victrola record The very imperfections of Colonial furniture speak a language that is lost in the modern factory We need not deny that there are also gains involved in the transition But whether they are compensatory gains is still an open question.

### III

It is, however, in the development of technique itself that the significance of the change comes out most clearly Under machine technique it is no longer generally true that the disciplines which lead to mastery of the technique lead also in the direction of what technique is for Training in workmanship is no longer, generally speaking, training in art

There are cases in which the continuity of technique and purpose still obtains, and it is these cases that constitute the real art of our time—though we do not usually think of them in that way The modern locomotive, the automobile, the aeroplane, the dynamo, the feats of civil engineering, especially the great dams, the instruments of the astronomer and the physicist—here are cases where mastery of technique still means mastery of design, where execution and intention run together, and the product sings with the old integrity of workmanship fully informed of purpose from the start Above all, the battleship—the one image of our time that can rouse the populace as could a Gothic portal in the age of faith. Whether these things are great art raises questions of ultimate intention that we must leave aside, but at least they fulfill the conditions under which art must always be produced If archi-



pects were steelworkers, in the same sense in which the builders of locomotives and battleships are engineers, architecture too might be more than a question mark

But over a wide field that was once the domain of art the divorce of technique from purpose has raised a series of problems Nor, indeed, over that field alone, the same disintegration is manifest in other social controls than that of art—the business of credit, for example Here too, much to our cost, we find that knowledge of technique can be acquired without wisdom in its application, and that “money begetting money” as an ultimate purpose is not even safe So, most conspicuously, in the pseudo-arts that science itself has created—radio and the movies Here again we have impressive technical development which does not of itself convey any hint of proper function or worthy purpose The mediæval mason could not carve his stone without some conception of what was fitting in design and what the stone was for The copyist, even if he was no monk, but merely a paid scribe (and sometimes very poorly paid), had, in the nature of his work, purpose and function For the glassworker, design was technique, technique design, and function the governor of both So with woodworker and smith, armorer and lapidary, poet and musician But in the “arts” born of science, technique gives no adequate lead to purpose Radio gives us a machine that will faithfully convey—anything you like, to the technician, as such, political blah and Beethoven symphony are all the same

Recently a friend of mine, an expert photographer, went out in a London taxi at midnight, testing a new supersensitive film He shot five hundred feet of it on ordinary street scenes, and every bit was overexposed! Magnificent achievement of technique!—but what to do with it when you have it? Technique as such has no more to say, *technicians* as such have no more to say And in the absence of the direct lead from technique to ultimate function, function becomes the uncontested quarry of the money motive, dictated by the patrons of technique—the money-makers Within these pseudo-arts the artist

has no natural status, if he would enter at all, it must be as an outsider who has to fight or compromise in an almost single-handed battle. The advantages that science has bestowed on his technique are more than offset by the severity of the struggle he has to make for his own spiritual integrity. And it is ironic that this struggle is most severe in just those fields that should give him his fullest opportunity—radio and the cinema.

#### IV

The proximate aim in both these fields is that of entertainment—partly because this is the one proximate aim thoroughly consistent with the ultimate idea of “money begetting money,” partly because the controllers are genuinely unable to envisage, or to compass, anything else. And the first thing to be said about it is that entertainment is not enough. It is not an adequate policy by which to deal with the common people. It is not even safe. After all, it has been tried before on a still grander scale. It killed the Latin drama much as it is killing the English, together with what there was of music and poetry, and it helped to kill Roman civilization itself. “All the resources and appliances of material civilization were mobilized to produce spectacles on a scale which the world has never seen before or since, and the net result was, from the point of view of culture, less than nothing.”

“Ah, but,” say the money-makers, “our entertainment is moral!” The movie industry points to the pontifical jurisdiction of the Hays organization, with its production code of negative maxims and its lists of previewing organizations “endorsing” pictures whose one claim to approval is that they do not conflict with the prejudices of really “nice” people. What more could anyone want?

Again, the first thing to be said is that morality—this sort of morality—is not enough. Morality of this negative generalized kind needs frequent and vigorous challenging if it is not to

degenerate into the lukewarm messiness of people who never indulge in a good drink, a cold bath, or an honest quarrel. All it amounts to is a rude procedure for assuring that the mass of people shall never be startled into thinking seriously, for holding the popular *mores* as stationary as possible in a world which is in every other respect changing rapidly. Bad taste, false sentiment, and downright vulgarity abound in endorsed pictures—to say nothing of the unendorsed pictures which go merrily on. The one stipulation is apparently that the cinema shall confirm the comfortable conviction that mass ideology is the best of all possible faiths, and that people who interfere with it are either villains *per se* or misguided innocents with whom a Hollywood providence will deal sternly in the last reel. The European movie, technically inferior as it often is to the American, is far more stimulating, because it is free both to deal seriously with important social issues and to make fun of things in general—including such sacrosanct affairs as marriage and divorce. The American movie, its system clogged and constipated with a sticky diet of stale ideas, has rendered itself almost incapable of either good drama or good farce.

The case of Mr Dreiser and Mr von Sternberg is illuminating. It might well have been doubted whether the essential values of *An American Tragedy* could possibly be translated into a moving picture, but \$138,000 is a lot of money, and Mr Dreiser assented to having the effort made. Here is what he thinks—with good reason—of the result. The novel is “an indictment of our social system,” and the film is a “gross misrepresentation.” “Instead of the picture presenting a universal psychological theme, it tells a specific story of a murder, instead of an indictment of society, the picture is a justification of society and an indictment of Clyde.” And here, most illuminating of all, is a letter which the industry publishes officially as proof of its slogan that “the objectionable become *unobjectionable*.” “When I heard this picture was to be made I rather regretted it, as I felt the book was not of sufficient value to be

brought before the public *The picture has made me change my mind*"

Current movie ideology is illustrated even more vividly by two press extracts reproduced side by side in the *Motion Picture Monthly*—the official organ of the Hays office. One states the opinion of the *Presbyterian*, a church publication from Philadelphia: "We saw *Skippy*, which is making its appeal to children. To us it was not funny and was utterly wrong in its general philosophy, and also presented a sickly sentimentalism on the part of silly parents." The other is an editorial comment from the *Press* of Houston, Texas: "When *Skippy* threw himself on the bed with his little heart seemingly broken, and when a little girl in front of me cried over the death of a dog in the picture, I was not ashamed that I had to wipe something from my eyes also. I like to see such pictures presented in Houston." Will it be believed that the industry thinks it has proved the value of the film by printing these two extracts side by side? One would like to hear the candid comments of any half-dozen Hollywood producers on *Skippy* and the sentimental editor.

After all, it is not as if Hollywood or Mr. Hays were consumed with a burning fire of conviction as to the finality of common taste or morality. The situation would be more hopeful if they were—somebody might undertake to cure them, and there would be an issue in the air. Mr. Hays was put in to drag the industry out of a mess, and stays in (very expensively) to keep it on the right side of the politicians and the bank ledgers. The result is that the American movie, considered as a whole, has *nothing to say*, and the public, this past two years, has been showing on that account a perceptible loss of interest in it.

It is matter, therefore, for serious consideration whether it would not be worth while, both for the industry and for the public, to scrap the entire line of tactics and propaganda pursued by the Hays organization and encourage producers to go ahead and produce whatever they like. Undoubtedly there

would be some risk involved—some pornography, in short. But there would remain, not merely the police, but an increasing number of people in the industry itself concerned to take it seriously and stop abuse. And there might be a good deal gained, for a reason suggested earlier in this article, which the reader may now care to consider.

## V

The movie industry, even in America, is at last beginning to develop an independent technique. It has been slow to do this because its principal interest hitherto has been, not the technique of the cinema, but the technique of "money begetting money." The power, however, of a purely technical interest in the cinema as such is asserting itself in numerous small groups or individuals scattered about the country, and to some extent even in Hollywood, and it is from technique, if from anywhere, that salvation may come.

By this I mean that if the American cinema, or any considerable part of it, can move forward from the point at which it is merely the commercial exploitation of an ingenious machine to the point at which it regards that machine as a necessary incidental in the practice of a genuine technique of *the cinema as such*,—a new means of expression,—then that technique itself may push its practitioners forward into a position in which they will be compelled to find something significant to say. A genuine cinema technique will (or rather may) of itself demand theme and subject matter that are significant in the social and philosophical, as well as in the artistic, sense. This is possibility, not certainty. And even as possibility it presupposes certain essentials: freedom for the producer, and an outlet to the public (which may have to be specially devised), freedom from the mob ideology inculcated by the Hays office and the financial interests, selection of theme and subject purely from the cinema point of view—not from a desire to exploit, for financial reasons, any new craze,

story, news topic, or reputation. But there is this much as *prima facie* encouragement for such a forecast: the films which have won lasting recognition as worth while, in the larger sense, are in most cases those in which a genuine cinema technique has been most nearly approached.

To take an early example, D. W. Griffith was one of the first men in America to strive for the development of a cinema technique that should be more than mere photography, or cine-photography. He developed not only spectacle (artificial, in his case), but the visual leitmotif, some intelligent use of the close-up, and an elementary *montage*; he realized, too, the emotional power of the visual sequence. Mr. Griffith would be the first to testify that his desire to do these things—to achieve what he called the mass drama—compelled him to search for material that would sustain them, and the result was that the famous Griffith films had something to say—something not very profound or original, perhaps, something that reflected in certain ways his personal prejudices, but something significant as far as it went.

Again, the moments of greatness that King Vidor has achieved are precisely those in which his technique has been nearest to pure cinema, his moments (or half hours) of failure are precisely those in which he falls back on mere story, star, or mob sentiment to carry his film along. Mr. Flaherty's film, just because it is so often real movie, conveys something profoundly suggestive to thought and imagination. Chaplin's work, precisely because it is so nearly pure cinema, constitutes a commentary on life that defies expression in any other medium. In Europe the documentary film is full of promise—the film in which actual subject matter is used simply on the basis of its suitability to cinema expression. The result is in many cases a challenging, yet almost unconscious, comment on civilization.

Let me state here that I purposely avoid discussion of the revolutionary cinema of Russia. That cinema has from its very nature something significant to say, and its tremendous in-

centive gives it a corresponding æsthetic advantage Its outlook is far more hopeful, and its essential problem far simpler, than that of the American cinema Similarly I make my acknowledgments to the revolutionary groups in this country and in England, especially to the editors of *Experimental Cinema*—groups which have come to demand a radical change in social control and philosophy They may be right in their contention that there is no redeeming the popular cinema without such change I will go so far as to say that it looks that way at present But I am trying here to outline a position which makes the fewest possible demands, which starts as near as possible to existing American circumstances And, with that in mind, the best hope I can discern lies in an increasing preoccupation with cinema technique—in the development, that is to say, of an attitude in which all that science can give is taken for granted, and its appliances fall increasingly into the control of men concerned with cinema expression as such Then, I suggest, it may once more be true that mastery of technique will lead also in the direction of what technique is for

## VI

The reader, if (like the writer) he is a pure outsider in this business, needs at this point to understand somewhat more definitely what is meant by the technique of the cinema, especially in those respects in which it is different from the technique of the camera The vast mass of American movies are still mere photography—good, when they are good, only in a mechanical sense The usual American film is built of what is supposed to be popular subject matter,—story, play, novel, revue, any old thing,—plus star, plus a few camera tricks and bits of camera prettiness tied together in a desperate effort to amuse the thirteen-year-old mind. (As a matter of fact, much of it is an insult to even the thirteen-year-olds I have two, and I know it ) The thesis here advanced applies

to it, therefore, only so far as an increasing interest in the cinema itself can win its way against all the other pressures and motives

Cinema consists of three elements—image, movement, sequence, and a little thought about each of them in turn can put the layman in a position to understand at least the elements of the discussion

Image a photograph in a rectangular frame, a photograph of something seen There are so many different things to see, and so many people to see them! And we all see such different things in the same objects, the same people—do we not? If anyone could show me your world exactly as you see it,—even if it consists of pretty much the same things, the same people, as my world,—I might learn quite a lot about you And then suppose you are a farmer and I a city clerk, or suppose you are on the crest of the wave, and I in the trough of some misfortune or obsession—what different things we shall see in each other's worlds! Here is one possibility of camera work in the hands of a director (like Alexander Room) who can get inside people's minds, and give you his characters by giving you their world as it is to them

Next take the case everybody has encountered—the case of the artist, sweating and suffering to show you the things *he* sees in your world for no other reason than because he must Still photography is being used to do this, not only in Germany but in America, in the work of Alfred Stieglitz and Edward Weston and other pioneers The significance of things—that is what such men are after, not mere prettiness To see their work is an event, something happens to the spectator, even if it is only a shock, a challenge to the visual understanding If you cannot see their work, look at a Cézanne or a Van Gogh still life—especially at Van Gogh's "Kitchen Chair" Here, indeed, is more than the camera can ever do, but the effort to grasp the peculiar kind of significance that such work attains will convey an idea of what image may be. The essence



of it cannot be translated, though a whole metaphysic may be built around it

Now consider the appearances of things as they may come to a philosophic or reflective mind, the sort of mind that, seeing them for what they are, sees them at the same time in a certain mood, a certain temper, a certain key—the key of compassion, let us say, or irony, or fatalism, or, if that be possible, *Sub specie æternitatis*. This is the order of vision that we meet in Eisenstein, in Chaplin, sometimes in King Vidor—this personal impersonality, this effort to convey through the image a certain way of apprehending things, a certain sense of life. And remember that at one moment your vision may be almost completely filled with some quite small thing,—an ink bottle, a fly, a hand (this is the justification for the close-up),—while at the next it may take in the contours of an entire landscape, an entire city, also that the camera can see more than the eye can see—farther down, and higher up, as it were. Observe, too, that in all this we are taking for granted all the technical accomplishments of the camera as such,—depth, *chiaroscuro*, stereoscopic effect, composition in the frame, camera angle, distortion, and so on,—and feeling our way forward toward a *use* of them which shall give us an idea of what these things are for.

Movement, and the rhythm of movement—the event. Let me say briefly (though it is, I think, the most æsthetically important of all these pointers) that all that is true of image—all—is in the same way true of the event. The cinema is much closer to the event than the stage—let anyone who doubts it read George Arliss's amusing account of his first cinema experience in *Up the Years from Bloomsbury*. I would ask the reader to apply, bit by bit, what has been said above of the image to the concept of the event, for this is one of the fundamental and unique properties of true cinema. The work of Pudovkin shows it in an intense degree, Pommer and René Clair use it effectively, though in quite other keys. Then the rhythm of movement—of gesture, of crowds, of machinery,

of traffic, of the sky, of the waves—here is something that cinema can handle and control to its own purposes, sometimes in the object itself, always in the instrument. And here again we have a technique that begins where photography leaves off, and leads—or may lead—of itself in the direction of what technique is for.

Sequence the succession of images and events, not all in the same tempo, the same key, or the same degree of realization. That is visual life, that is cinema. Here is an illuminating quotation. "The possibility that the great master did not realize the erroneous relationship of the sizes is quite out of the question. He rejected naturalism quite consciously, and while every detail separately regarded is constructed on the principle of the most concentrated naturalism, their combination in the general composition is subordinated solely to the problem of content. He took as his normal proportions the quintessence of psychological expressiveness." The passage refers, not to a cinema artist, but to the eighteenth-century Japanese engraver, Sharaku, and it is quoted from Kurth's monograph by Eisenstein in a recent issue of *Experimental Cinema*. Eisenstein adds —

"Is not this exactly what we of the cinema do in time, as he in simultaneity, when we cause a monstrous disproportion of the elements of a normally flowing event, dismembering it . . . By the combination of these monstrous incongruities we gather up the disintegrated event once more into one whole, but in our aspect. According to our treatment in relation to the event."

That brings the reader into contact with what I am tempted to call the metaphysics of *montage*—*montage* being the deliberate ordering of sequence in film image and event, looking toward the final totality of effect.

I take another, perhaps easier, analogy from the writings of the pianist, George Woodhouse. Woodhouse, taking the Tannhauser "Pilgrims' Chorus" as a familiar example, asks, In what does the music really consist? It is not simply in the melody. It

is not in the rather uninteresting chords, taken as chords. The music is what happens *in between* the chords, happens in the listener's mind, the music is in the sequence. From the tension established in the mind, subsisting and developing through the succession of auditory impulses, arises a whole that is more than the sum of the parts—that is, in short, Wagner's music. Along such lines advanced workers in the cinema are developing their own visual-temporal art—an art that is only just struggling into the Hollywood consciousness. And again, it turns out to be a technique that may, of its own momentum, push the film forward into the realm of meaning.

## VII

That the development in America of cinema technique may lead in the direction of really significant art is but a guess, but in view of the circumstances it seems the best guess possible. The present financial motivation of the industry imposes on it a double handicap: the advance toward a genuine cinema technique is retarded, and the results of that technique sincerely and courageously used are discountenanced. Sincerity and courage are not among the virtues known to the Hays office. Yet neither of these handicaps is inherent even in private financial control. Movies everywhere are commercial except in Russia, but even from the commercial point of view it pays better to aim high than to aim low. The American cinema for many years has based its policy upon the appeal to the mob mind. It is now paying the penalty—the financial penalty—of having done so. It is likely to go on paying that penalty for a long time without even the consolation of being able to lay the blame upon the trade depression. For the simple fact is that people are easily surfeited with that sort of entertainment. So long as new shocks, new stunts, can be produced every week, idle curiosity may sustain interest, but the shocks and the stunts become more and more expensive as they become less and less effective, and eventually the public is seized with

apathy while the industry is in the grip of financial elephantiasis

That is the present position. The public has reached the point at which all movies and all movie stars begin to look alike, and it will not take the trouble to distinguish the good films from the bad ones. As a matter of fact, the industry has produced some of the best narrative films ever made anywhere within the past year or so. But it has gone on so long advertising bad work and good work alike in shrieking superlatives that the appeal no longer "registers." We have heard it all so often before.

If the movie industry were to consult the librarians as to what people read in America, it might get some inkling of its own mistake. Apart from the phenomenal success in this country of such authors as Dewey, Wells, Russell, Jeans, Edgington, the tremendous improvement within the past decade in the quality of popular novels, detective stories, and the writing in the big weeklies is worth pondering by the commercial producers. America is not so completely tabloid-minded as Hollywood thinks it is. Thousands upon thousands of quite ordinary people have so often paid their money to sit in darkness for a couple of hours and have their senses and their intelligence simultaneously affronted that not even the industry's most frantic advertising will now lure them within reach of a box office. The industry has aimed for years too low, and the public has awakened to the fact before Hollywood. It does not pay to libel half a nation. In the long run, art (or the nearest you can get to it) is a better investment than clap-trap.

We are not yet ready to admit—at least, the writer is not—that the only hope for art lies in social revolution. If the Russian cinema is on the whole the finest, that is not because of, but in spite of, the fact that it is propaganda. Its strength lies in its freedom from the stupid fetishism of "money begetting money," in its freedom to concern itself with life that is real in place of life that is sham. It might be even stronger were

the hand of the state less heavy upon it. For it is less likely that revolution will foster art than that art will foster revolution, and there is no general validity in either theorem. All that can be said is that art will gravitate toward that system in which it finds the greater freedom. Poor and dangerous is the state of that nation in which the search for riches involves the enslavement of the arts.

This is not generally the case of America. Whatever else may be said of America, it cannot be accused of unfriendliness toward the arts. Here is the possibility of a new art, born out of science, which may with luck and courage (invincible combination!) enable American society to look itself in the face as never before, and perhaps—who knows?—discern some nobler destiny upon its forehead than “money begetting money.” Why should not the industry use its own powers of finance and publicity, its control of distribution and exhibition facilities, in order to keep its output worthy of a people that still claims to be both free and progressive? It has everything—including perhaps a few dollars—to gain, and, heaven knows, little enough to lose. Or must this become yet another case where private charity has to be called in to rescue culture from civilization?

## The Scientific Revolution<sup>1</sup>

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JAMES HARVEY ROBINSON

James Harvey Robinson (1863- ), historian and philosopher, is one of the most stimulating thinkers and writers of the present day *The Mind in the Making* (1921), from which this selection is taken, is perhaps his most influential recent publication Also important in the field of modern thought are *The Humanizing of Knowledge* (1923), and *The Ordeal of Civilization* (1926)

AT THE opening of the seventeenth century a man of letters, of sufficient genius to be suspected by some of having written the plays of Shakespeare, directed his distinguished literary ability to the promotion and exaltation of natural science Lord Bacon was the chief herald of that habit of scientific and critical thought which has played so novel and all-important a part in the making of the modern mind When but twenty-two years old he was already sketching out a work which he planned to call *Temporis Partus Maximus* (*The Greatest Thing Ever*) He felt that he had discovered why the human mind, enmeshed in mediaeval metaphysics and indifferent to natural phenomena, had hitherto been a stunted and ineffective thing, and how it might be so nurtured and guided as to gain undreamed of strength and vigor.

And never has there been a man better equipped with literary gifts to preach a new gospel than Francis Bacon He spent years in devising eloquent and ingenious ways of delivering learning from the "discredits and disgraces" of the past, and in exhorting man to explore the realms of nature for his

<sup>1</sup> From *The Mind in the Making*, published by Harper & Brothers Reprinted by permission

delight and profit. He never wearied of trumpeting forth the glories of the new knowledge which would come with the study of common things and the profitable uses to which it might be put in relieving man's estate. He impeached the mediaeval schoolmen for spinning out endless cobwebs of learning, remarkable for their fineness, but of no substance or spirit. He urged the learned to come out of their cells, study the creations of God, and build upon what they discovered a new and true philosophy.

Even in his own day students of natural phenomena had begun to carry out Bacon's general program with striking effects. While he was urging men to cease "tumbling up and down in their own reason and conceits" and to spell out, and so by degrees to learn to read, the volume of God's works, Galileo had already begun the reading and had found out that the Aristotelian physics ran counter to the facts, that a body once in motion will continue to move forever in a straight line unless it be stopped or deflected. Studying the sky through his newly invented telescope, he beheld the sun spots and noted the sun's revolution on its axis, the phases of Venus, and the satellites of Jupiter. These discoveries seemed to confirm the ideas advanced long before by Copernicus—the earth was *not* the center of the universe and the heavens were *not* perfect and unchanging. He dared to discuss these matters in the language of the people and was, as everyone knows, condemned by the Inquisition.

This preoccupation with natural phenomena and this refusal to accept the old, established theories until they had been verified by an investigation of common fact was a very novel thing. It introduced a fresh and momentous element into our intellectual heritage. We have recalled the mysticism, supernaturalism, and intolerance of the Middle Ages, their reliance on old books, and their indifference to everyday fact except as a sort of allegory for the edification of the Christian pilgrim. In the mediaeval universities the professors, or "schoolmen," devoted themselves to the elaborate formulation of Christian

doctrine and the interpretation of Aristotle's works. It was a period of revived Greek metaphysics, adapted to prevailing religious presuppositions. Into this fettered world Bacon, Galileo, Descartes, and others brought a new aspiration to promote investigation and honest, critical thinking about everyday things.

*These founders of modern natural science realized that they would have to begin afresh. This was a bold resolve, but not so bold as must be that of the student of mankind today if he expects to free himself from the trammels of the past.* Bacon pointed out that the old days were not those of mature knowledge, but of youthful human ignorance. "These times are the ancient times, when the world is ancient, and not those we count ancient, *ordine retrogrado*,<sup>2</sup> by a computation backward from ourselves." In his *New Atlantis* he pictures an ideal State which concentrated its resources on systematic scientific research, with a view to applying new discoveries to the betterment of man's lot.

Descartes, who was a young man when Bacon was an old one, insisted on the necessity, if we proposed to seek the truth, of questioning *everything* at least once in our lives. To all these leaders in the development of modern science doubt, not faith, was the beginning of wisdom. They doubted—and with good reason—what the Greeks were supposed to have discovered, they doubted all the old books and all the university professors' lecture notes. They did not venture to doubt the Bible, but they eluded it in various ways. They set to work to find out exactly what happened under certain circumstances. They experimented individually and reported their discoveries to the scientific academies which began to come into existence.

As one follows the deliberations of these bodies it is pathetic to observe how little the learning of previous centuries, in spite of its imposing claims, had to contribute to a fruitful knowledge of common things. It required a century of hard work to establish the most elementary facts which would now be found in a child's book. How water and air act, how to meas-

<sup>2</sup> In reverse order.



ure time and temperature and atmospheric pressure, had to be discovered. The microscope revealed the complexity of organic tissues, the existence of minute creatures, vaguely called infusoria, and the strange inhabitants of the blood, the red and white corpuscles. The telescope put an end to the flattering assumption that the cosmos circled around man and the little ball he lives on.

Without a certain un-Greek, practical inventive tendency which, for reasons not easily to be discovered, first began to manifest itself in the thirteenth century, this progress would not have been possible. The new thinkers descended from the magisterial chair and patiently fussed with lenses, tubes, pulleys, and wheels, thus weaning themselves from the adoration of man's mind and understanding. They had to devise the machinery of investigation as investigation itself progressed.

Moreover, they did not confine themselves to the conventionally noble and elevated subjects of speculation. They addressed themselves to worms and ditch water in preference to metaphysical subtleties. They agreed with Bacon that the mean and even filthy things deserve study. All this was naturally scorned by the university professors, and the universities consequently played little or no part in the advance of natural science until the nineteenth century.

Nor were the moral leaders of mankind behind the intellectual in opposing the novel tendencies. The clergy did all they could to perpetuate the squalid belief in witchcraft, but found no place for experimental science in their scheme of learning, and judged it offensive to the Maker of all things. But their opposition could do no more than hamper the new scientific impulse, which was far too potent to be seriously checked.

So in one department of human thought—the investigation of natural processes—majestic progress has been made since the opening of the seventeenth century, with every promise of continued and startling advance. The new methods employed by students of natural science have resulted in the accumulation of a stupendous mass of information in regard to the

material structure and operation of things, and the gradual way in which the earth and all its inhabitants have come into being. The nature and workings of atoms and molecules are being cleared up, and their relation to heat, light, and electricity established. The slow processes which have brought about the mountains and valleys, the seas and plains, have been exposed. The structure of the elementary cell can be studied under powerful lenses, its divisions, conjunctions, differentiation, and multiplication into the incredibly intricate substance of plants and animals can be traced.

In short, man is now in a position, for the first time in his history, to have some really clear and accurate notion of the world in which he dwells and of the living creatures which surround him and with which he must come to terms. It would seem obvious that this fresh knowledge should enable him to direct his affairs more intelligently than his ancestors were able to do in their ignorance. He should be in a position to accommodate himself more and more successfully to the exigencies of an existence which he can understand more fully than any preceding generation, and he should aspire to deal more and more sagaciously with himself and his fellow-men.

But while our information in regard to man and the world is incalculably greater than that available a hundred, even fifty years ago, we must frankly admit that the knowledge is still so novel, so imperfectly assimilated, so inadequately coordinated, and so feebly and ineffectively presented to the great mass of men, that its *direct* effects upon human impulses and reasoning and outlook are as yet inconsiderable and disappointing. We *might* think in terms of molecules and atoms, but we rarely do. Few have any more knowledge of their own bodily operations than had their grandparents. The farmer's confidence in the phases of the moon gives way but slowly before recent discoveries in regard to the bacteria of the soil. Few who use the telephone, ride on electric cars, and carry a camera have even the mildest curiosity in regard to how these things work. It is only *indirectly*, through *invention*, that

scientific knowledge touches our lives on every hand, modifying our environment, altering our daily habits, dislocating the anciently established order, and imposing the burden of constant adaptation on even the most ignorant and lethargic

Unlike a great part of man's earlier thought, modern scientific knowledge and theory have not remained matter merely for academic discourse and learned books, but have provoked the invention of innumerable practical devices which surround us on every hand, and from which we can now scarce escape by land or sea. Thus while scientific knowledge has not greatly affected the thoughts of most of us, its influence in the promotion of modern invention has served to place us in a new setting or environment, the novel features of which it would be no small task to explain to one's great-great-grandfather, should he unexpectedly apply for up-to-date information. So even if modern scientific *knowledge* is as yet so imperfect and ill understood as to make it impossible for us to apply much of it directly and personally in our daily conduct, we nevertheless cannot neglect the urgent effects of scientific *inventions*, for they are constantly posing new problems of adjustment to us, and sometimes disposing of old ones.

Let us recall a few striking examples of the astonishing way in which what seemed in the beginning to be rather trivial inventions and devices have, with the improvements of modern science, profoundly altered the conditions of life.

Some centuries before the time of Bacon and Galileo four discoveries were made which, supplemented and elaborated by later insight and ingenuity, may be said to underlie our modern civilization. A writer of the time of Henry II of England reports that sailors when caught in fog or darkness were wont to touch a needle to a bit of magnetic iron. The needle would then, it had been found, whirl around in a circle and come to rest pointing north. On this tiny index the vast extension of modern commerce and imperialism rests.

That lentil-shaped bits of glass would magnify objects was known before the end of the thirteenth century, and from

that little fact have come microscopes, telescopes, spectroscopes, and cameras, and from these in turn has come a great part of our present knowledge of natural processes in men, animals, and plants and our comprehension of the cosmos at large

Gunpowder began to be used a few decades after the lens was discovered, it and its terrible descendants have changed the whole problem of human warfare and of the public defense

The printing press, originally a homely scheme for saving the labor of the copyist, has not only made modern democracy and nationality possible, but has helped by the extension of education to undermine the ancient foundations upon which human industry has rested from the beginnings of civilization

In the middle of the eighteenth century the steam engine began to supplant the muscular power of men and animals, which had theretofore been only feebly supplemented by windmills and water wheels. And now we use steam and gas engines and water power to generate potent electric currents which do their work far from the source of supply. Mechanical ingenuity has utilized all this undreamed-of energy in innumerable novel ways for producing old and new commodities in tremendous quantities and distributing them with incredible rapidity throughout the earth

Vast factories have sprung up, with their laborious multitudes engaged on minute contributions to the finished article, overgrown cities sprawl over the neighboring green fields and pastures, long freight trains of steel cars thunder across continents, monstrous masses of wealth pile up, are reinvested, and applied to making the whole system more and more inconceivably intricate and interdependent, and incidentally there is hurry and worry and discontent and hazard beyond belief for a creature who has to grasp it all and control it all with a mind reared on that of an animal, a child, and a savage.

As if these changes were not astounding enough, now has come the chemist who devotes himself to making not new *commodities* (or old ones in new ways), but new *substances*.

He juggles with the atoms of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, chlorine, and the rest, and far outruns the workings of nature Up to date he has been able to produce artfully over two hundred thousand compounds, for some of which mankind formerly depended on the alchemy of animals and plants He can make foodstuffs out of sewage, he can entrap the nitrogen in the air and use it to raise wheat to feed, or high explosives to slaughter, his fellows He no longer relies on plants and animals for dyes and perfumes In short, a chemical discovery may at any moment devastate an immemorial industry and leave both capital and labor in the lurch The day may not be far distant when, should the chemist learn to control the incredible interatomic energy, the steam engine will seem as complete an anachronism as the treadmill

The uttermost parts of the earth have been visited by Europeans, and commerce has brought all races of the globe into close touch We have now to reckon with every nation under heaven, as was shown in the World War At the same time steam and electrical communication have been so perfected that space has been practically annihilated as regards speech, and in matters of transportation reduced to perhaps a fifth So all the peoples of the earth form economically a loose and, as yet, scarcely acknowledged federation of man, in which the fate of any member may affect the affairs of all the others, no matter how remote they may be geographically

All these unprecedented conditions have conspired to give business for business' sake a fascination and overwhelming importance it has never had before We no longer make things for the sake of making them, but for money The chair is not made to sit on, but for profit, the soap is no longer prepared for purposes of cleanliness, but to be sold for profit Practically nothing catches our eye in the way of writing that was written for its own sake and not for money Our magazines and newspapers are our modern commercial travelers proclaiming the gospel of business competition Formerly the laboring classes worked because they were slaves, or because they were

defenseless and could not escape from thralldom—or, mayhap, because they were natural artisans, but now they are coming into a position where they can combine and bargain and enter into business competition with their employers. Like their employers, they are learning to give as little as possible for as much as possible. This is good business, and the employer should realize that at last he has succeeded in teaching his employees to be strictly businesslike. When houses were built to live in, and wheat and cattle grown to eat, these essential industries took care of themselves. But now that profit is the motive for building houses and raising grain, if the promised returns are greater from manufacturing automobiles or embroidered lingerie, one is tempted to ask if there are any longer compelling reasons for building houses or raising food?

Along with the new inventions and discoveries and our inordinately pervasive commerce have come two other novel elements in our environment—what we vaguely call “democracy” and “nationality.” These also are to be traced to applied science and mechanical contrivances.

The printing press has made popular education possible, and it is our aspiration to have every boy and girl learn to read and write—an ideal that the Western World has gone far to realize in the last hundred years. General education, introduced first among men and then extended to women, has made plausible the contention that all adults should have a vote, and thereby exercise some ostensible influence in the choice of public officials and in the direction of the policy of the government.

Until recently the mass of the people have not been invited to turn their attention to public affairs, which have been left in the control of the richer classes and their representatives and agents, the statesmen or politicians. Doubtless our crowded cities have contributed to a growing sense of the importance of the common man, for all must now share the street car, the public park, the water supply, and contagious diseases.

But there is a still more fundamental discovery underlying

our democratic tendencies This is the easily demonstrated scientific truth that nearly all men and women, whatever their social and economic status, may have much greater possibilities of activity and thought and emotion than they exhibit in the particular conditions in which they happen to be placed, that in all ranks may be found evidence of unrealized capacity, that we are living on a far lower scale of intelligent conduct and rational enjoyment than is necessary

Our present notions of nationality are of very recent origin, going back scarcely a hundred years Formerly nations were made up of the subjects of this or that gracious majesty and were regarded by their God-given rulers as beasts of burden or slaves or, in more amiable moods, as children The same forces that have given rise to modern democracy have made it possible for vast groups of people, such as make up France or the United States, to be held together more intimately than ever before by the news which reaches them daily of the enterprises of their government and the deeds of their conspicuous fellow-countrymen

In this way the inhabitants of an extensive territory embracing hundreds of thousands of square miles are brought as close together as the people of Athens in former days Man is surely a gregarious animal who dislikes solitude He is, moreover, given to the most exaggerated estimate of his tribe, and on these ancient foundations modern nationality has been built up by means of the printing press, the telegraph, and cheap postage *So it has fallen out that just when the world was becoming effectively cosmopolitan in its economic interdependence, its scientific research, and its exchange of books and art, the ancient tribal insolence has been developed on a stupendous scale*

The manner in which man has revolutionized his environment, habits of conduct, and purposes of life by inventions is perhaps the most astonishing thing in human history It is an obscure and hitherto rather neglected subject But it is clear enough, from the little that has been said here, that since the

Middle Ages, and especially in the past hundred years, science has so hastened the process of change that it becomes increasingly difficult for man's common run of thinking to keep pace with the radical alterations in his actual practices and conditions of living



## Science and Religion<sup>1</sup>

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ROBERT ANDREWS MILLIKAN

Robert Andrews Millikan (1868- ), one of the world's leading physicists, is the holder of many honorary degrees and medals for his scientific accomplishments, especially in the study of the structure of the atom, the electron, and the newly-discovered cosmic rays. Besides many advanced scientific textbooks and professional papers, he has contributed articles on general aspects of science to the better magazines. Two of his books of general interest are *Science and Life* (1924), from which this essay is taken, and *The Evolution of Science and Religion* (1927). Dr. Millikan is an active church worker.

THERE seems to be at the present time a strange recrudescence of a point of view which is completely out of keeping with the developments of the age in which we live, a point of view which thoughtful leaders of both science and religion have in all ages realized never had any basis for existence. In the time of Galileo it is perhaps understandable, in view of the crudity of the sixteenth century, that certain misguided religious leaders should have imagined that the discovery of the earth's motions might tend to undermine in some way the basis of religion and who, therefore, attempted to suppress Galileo's teachings. Yet it is to me not a little surprising that men even of such opportunities as Galileo's persecutors could have got religion upon such an entirely false basis in their thinking as to make its fundamental verities, its very existence, dependent in any way upon any scientific discovery. It is not a question of whether Galileo was right or wrong,

<sup>1</sup> From *Science and Life*, by Robert A. Millikan. Copyright, The Pilgrim Press. Used by permission.

~~whether the earth actually revolves about the sun or the sun about the earth~~ That is a scientific matter with which religion as such has nothing whatever to do, and which should not have given it the slightest concern. Science could be counted upon to take care of that. It is its business to doubt, and it always does so as long as there is any room left for uncertainty. That even those inquisitors were far behind their own times in supposing that there could be any real contradiction between religion, properly understood, and the findings of astronomers cannot perhaps be better demonstrated than by the following quotation from St. Augustine, who lived twelve hundred years earlier, about 400 A D, and is probably recognized as the most influential authority, next to Jesus and St. Paul, of the early Christian church.

"It very often happens," says Augustine, in commenting upon the entire distinctness from his point of view of the two great lines of thought, the natural and spiritual, "that there is some question *as to the earth or the sky, or the other elements of this world* . . . respecting which one who is not a Christian has knowledge derived from most certain reasoning or observation and it is very disgraceful and mischievous, and of all things to be carefully avoided, that a Christian, speaking of such matters as being according to the Christian scriptures, should be heard by an unbeliever talking such nonsense that the unbeliever, perceiving him to be as wide from the mark as east from west, can hardly restrain himself from laughing."

That this same controversy that Augustine thus saw nearly sixteen hundred years ago had no basis for existence, because it is outside the proper field of religion, but which nevertheless flared up so violently in Galileo's time, and then died out as men grew in intelligence, should have appeared again in as enlightened a country as America, in the year 1922, is one of the most amazing phenomena of our times. But it is not less amazing than it is deplorable, for the damage which well meaning but small visioned men can do to the cause of organized religion as represented in the Christian church through

the introduction inside the organization of such a disintegrating influence is incalculably greater than any which could possibly be done by attacks from outside. Indeed, should the movement succeed the church would inevitably soon lose all its most vital elements and society would be obliged to develop some other agency to do the work which the church was organized to do, which in the main it has always done, and which to a very large extent it now does, namely, the work of serving as the great dynamo for injecting into human society the sense of social responsibility, the spirit of altruism, of service, of brotherly love, of Christlikeness and of eliminating as far as possible the spirit of greed and self-seeking.

But I am not going to place the whole blame for the existence of this situation upon misguided leaders of religion. The responsibility is a divided one, for science is just as often misrepresented as is religion by men of little vision, of no appreciation of its limitations, and of imperfect comprehension of the real rôle which it plays in human life—by men who lose sight of all spiritual values and therefore exert an influence upon youth which is unsettling, irreligious, and sometimes immoral. The two groups, the one in the religious field, the other in the scientific, are in reality very much alike. They represent essentially the same type of mind, or perhaps I should say, the same stage of intellectual development. Each interprets the Bible, for example, essentially literally, instead of historically, the one to support, the other to condemn. Both may be assumed to be sincere, but the one is wholly unacquainted with science, while presuming to judge it, the other is in almost complete ignorance of what religion is, while scoffing at it. I am ready to admit that it is quite as much because of the existence of scientists of this type as of their counterparts in the field of religion that the fundamentalist controversy has flared up to-day, and it is high time for scientists to recognize their share of the responsibility and take such steps as they can to remove their share of the cause.

I do not suppose that anything which I may say will exert

much influence upon the groups whose prejudices have already been aroused, and who are therefore not interested in an objective analysis of the situation, but I may perhaps hope that some of the youth whose minds have been confused by the controversy may profit somewhat from a restatement of what seem to me the perfectly obvious and indisputable facts

*The first fact which seems to be altogether obvious and undisputed by thoughtful men is that there is actually no conflict whatever between science and religion when each is correctly understood* The simplest and probably the most convincing proof of the truth of that statement is found in the testimony of the greatest minds who have been leaders in the field of science, upon the one hand, and in the field of religion, upon the other Suppose, for example, that we select the greatest names in the last two centuries of the history of British sciences, or, for that matter, of world science Everyone would agree that the stars that shine brightest in that history, as one's glance sweeps down from 1650 to 1920, are found in the names of Newton, whose life centered about 1680, Faraday, living about 1830, Maxwell, 1870, Kelvin, 1890, and Lord Raleigh, who died in 1921 No more earnest seekers after truth, no intellects of more penetrating vision, can be found anywhere, at any time, than these, and yet every one of them has been a devout and professed follower of religion It was Kelvin who first estimated the age of the earth at something like a hundred million years without seeing the least incompatibility, in spite of the first chapters of Genesis, between that scientific conclusion and his adherence to the church, of which he was a lifelong member and a constant attendant Indeed, in 1887, when he was at the very height of his powers, he wrote "I believe that the more thoroughly science is studied the further does it take us from anything comparable to atheism." Again in 1903, toward the end of his life, he wrote "If you think strongly enough you will be forced by science to the belief in God, which is the foundation of all religion You will find it not antagonistic, but helpful, to religion" His biographer,

Silvanus P Thompson, says "His faith was always of a very simple and childlike nature, undogmatic and untainted by sectarian bitterness *It pained him to hear crudely atheistic views expressed by young men who had never known the deeper side of existence*" Just as strong a case of the same sort can be made by turning to the biographies of any of the other men mentioned, and these were chosen, let it be remembered, not because they were religious men, but because they are universally recognized as the foremost of scientists Indeed, I doubt if the world has ever produced in any field of endeavor men of more commanding intellects than two of them, Sir Isaac Newton and James Clerk-Maxwell

If someone says that I am calling only on the testimony of physicists and of Englishmen, then listen to the man whom the French nation has repeatedly voted the foremost of all Frenchmen, and who is also easily the peer of any biologist who has ever lived anywhere, Louis Pasteur, of whom his biographer says, "Finally, let it be remembered that Pasteur was a deeply religious man" Over his tomb in the Institute Pasteur are inscribed these words of his "Happy is he who carries a God within him, an ideal of beauty to which he is obedient—an ideal of art, an ideal of science, an ideal of the fatherland, an ideal of the virtues of the Gospel"

Or, again, if I am accused of calling merely on the testimony of the past, on the thinking which preceded the advent of this new twentieth century in which we live, I can bring the evidence strictly up to date by asking you to name the dozen most outstanding scientists in America to-day and then showing you that the great majority of them will bear emphatic testimony, not only to the complete lack of antagonism between the fields of science and religion, but to their own fundamental religious convictions One naturally begins with the man who occupies the most conspicuous scientific position in the United States, namely, the president of the National Academy of Sciences, who is at present both the head of the Smithsonian Institute of Washington and the president of the

American Association for the Advancement of Science, Dr Charles D Walcott, one of the foremost of American students of the evolution of life in the early geologic ages. He is personally known to me to be a man of deep religious conviction and has recently written me asking that he be described for the purposes of this address, which he has seen, as "an active church worker." The same is true of Henry Fairfield Osborn, the director of the American Museum of Natural History of New York, and one of the foremost exponents of evolution in the country. Another rival for eminence in this field is Edwin G Conklin of Princeton, who in recently published articles has definitely shown himself a proponent of the religious interpretation of life. In the same category I know, also from direct correspondence, that I may place John C Merriam, president of the Carnegie Institution of Washington and America's foremost paleontologist, Michael Pupin, the very first of our electrical experts who has "approved every word" of this address and recently delivered a better one at Columbia University on this same subject, John Coulter, dean of American botanists, A A and W A Noyes, foremost among our chemists, James R Angell, president of Yale University, an eminent psychologist, with whom I have had an exchange of letters on this subject, James A Breasted, our most eminent archeologist, who served with me for years on the board of trustees of a Chicago church, upon which also T C Chamberlin, dean of American geologists, was a constant attendant, Dr C G Abbot, home secretary of the National Academy of Sciences, eminent astronomer and active churchman, and so on through the list of a large number of the scientists of eminence in this country.

Turn now to the other side of the picture and ask what have been the views of the most outstanding and most inspired religious leaders upon the relations of science to religion, and you obtain altogether similar testimony. Was it not Jesus himself, who said, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." There is not one syllable in all that he

taught nor one idea which he introduced into human life which would justify one in arraying him on the side of those who would see antagonism between any scientific truth and the deepest of spiritual values. There were no creeds in Jesus' teaching, no verbal inspirations of any sort. Religion was to him a life of love and duty, the simple expression of the Golden Rule.

Turning next to great religious personalities since Jesus' day, I have already quoted Augustine to show how he warned against religious leaders of such narrow insight as to make religion a laughing-stock by the presentation of an antagonism which did not exist. John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist church, in the chapter of his *Compendium of Natural Philosophy* on "A General View of the Gradual Progression of Beings," has a passage which speaks of "the ostrich with the feet of a goat which unites birds to quadrupeds," and then continues, "By what degrees does Nature raise herself to man?"

How will she rectify this head that is always inclined toward earth? How change these paws into flexible arms? What method will she make use of to transform these crooked feet into skillful and supple hands? Or how will she widen and extend this contracted stomach? In what manner will she place the breasts and give them a roundness suitable to them? The ape is this rough draft of man, this rude sketch, an imperfect representation which nevertheless bears a resemblance to him, and is the last creature that serves to display the admirable progression of the works of God. But mankind have their gradations as well as other productions of our globe. *There is a prodigious number of continued links between the most perfect man and the ape*" (Italics mine.) I am not here asserting that Wesley's point of view was correct. For our present purposes that is quite immaterial. But he was a supreme religious leader and the quotation shows that he saw too clearly to allow his scientific thinking to be trammelled by any man-made religious dogmas.

Again, in our own time, there has been no more spiritual

religious leader than Henry Drummond, whose most inspiring work was in showing the contribution of science to religion, and I think I might name practically all of the outstanding religious leaders now living and say that there is not one in ten of them who would not take his place beside Jesus and Augustine and Drummond and Beecher and Lyman Abbott and Fosdick and Soares and King and Brown and Burton and Mathews and a host of other *men of broad vision and deep experience who have seen science and religion as twin sisters which are effectively cooperating in leading the world on to better things*

My argument thus far has been merely this, that there can be no conflict between science and religion if the greatest minds in the two fields, the minds to which we look for our definitions of what both science and religion are, have not only not seen such a conflict but have clearly seen and clearly stated that there is none

But now let me go to my second obvious fact and show why in the nature of things there can be no conflict This appears at once as soon as one attempts to define for himself what is the place of science and what the place of religion in human life *The purpose of science is to develop without prejudice or preconception of any kind a knowledge of the facts, the laws, and the processes of nature The even more important task of religion, on the other hand, is to develop the consciences, the ideals, and the aspirations of mankind*

The definition of science I think all will agree with The definition of religion is in essence that embodied in the teachings of Jesus, who, unlike many of his followers of narrower vision, did not concern himself at all with creeds, but centered his whole teaching about a life of service and the spread of the spirit of love It is of course true that the scientific and the religious sides of life often come into contact and mutually support each other Science without religion obviously may become a curse, rather than a blessing to mankind, but science dominated by the spirit of religion is the key to progress and



the hope of the future On the other hand, history has shown that religion without science breeds dogmatism, bigotry, persecution, religious wars, and all the other disasters which in the past have been heaped upon mankind in the name of religion, disasters which have been so fatal to organized religion itself that at certain times and in certain countries the finest characters and the most essentially religious men have been found outside the church In some countries that is the situation to-day, and *wherever this is true it is because the essence of religion has been lost sight of, buried under theologies and other external trappings which correspond exactly to the "munt, the anuse, and the cummun" of Jesus' day* If anyone wishes to see what disaster these excrescences can bring upon the cause of real religion let him read the history of the church in Asia Minor for the first six centuries and see for himself what sects and schisms and senseless quarrels over the nature of the person of Jesus can do in the way of sucking the life-blood out of the spirit of his teachings and out of the effectiveness of the organization which was started for the sole purpose of spreading that spirit.

Yet in America, at least, it is not primarily those inside the church who thus misinterpret and misunderstand it, though we must sorrowfully admit that such a group does exist here It is, however, for the most part the outsiders, the critics who have never seen the inside of church walls, and many of whom know so little about the church in America as to actually believe that Christianity is to be identified with mediæval theology, when the fact is so obvious that he who runs may read, that all that is vital in Christianity has remained altogether untouched by the most complete revolutions in theology, such as have gone on, for example, during the past hundred years. Many of us were brought up under creeds and theologies which have now completely passed on, as such things will continue to do as the world progresses, and yet, as we look back, we see that the essential thing which the churches of our childhood were doing for us and for our neighbors then

is precisely what they are doing now, namely, stimulating us to right conduct, as each of us sees it, inspiring us to *do as we know we ought to do*, developing our ideals and our aspirations. There is a very simple and a very scientific way of finding out for yourself what is the heart and center of the Christian religion, the fundamental and vital thing which it stands for in human society, and that is to get far enough back so that details are lost sight of and then to observe what is the element which is common to all Christian churches in the United States. He who does that will see at once that *it is the life and the teachings of Jesus which constitute all that is essential to Christianity, that the spread of his spirit of unselfishness, of his idealism, and of his belief in the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God is the great purpose of the Christian religion*. In other words, that religion exists, as stated above, for the sake of developing the consciences, the ideals, and the aspirations of mankind.

My third obvious fact is that *both science and religion have reached their present status through a process of development from the crudest beginnings*. This will be universally recognized in the case of science, and in the case of religion the most superficial study of history shows that this is true. The religious ideals and practices of the American Indians and of all other primitive tribes, with their totem-poles and incantations, have obviously been of the most primitive type. The ideas of duty, of responsibility, have always been involved in these religions, but the motives of right conduct, as primitive man conceived it, have been, from our present point of view, of the most unenlightened and even unworthy sort.

*But is it not altogether obvious that religion cannot possibly rise higher than the stage of development of the people of whose ideals it is the expression?* Nothing could show that process of development better than the Bible itself, for the early books of the Old Testament reveal the conception of God, characteristic indeed of the age, but not at all satisfying to us, for it was a God who was indeed benevolent and just

toward his own chosen people, but vindictive and cruel and utterly regardless of the welfare of those outside this chosen group. This imperfect conception is developed and refined through the history of the Jews as portrayed in the Bible until it culminates in the all-embracing love and fatherhood preached by Jesus. He who would deny this developmental process going on in both science and religion and clearly revealed in all the records of the past which we have, must shut his eyes to the indisputable facts as they are presented in all history, including sacred history.

To me it has always been of the utmost interest and profit, especially when I was disposed to judge severely great religious leaders of the past, like Paul or Moses, to try to conceive myself living in their surroundings, with their lack of scientific knowledge, interpreting life from the limited point of view which they had, formulating rules of conduct relating, for example, to matters of hygiene, such as those dealt with in Deuteronomy, trying to interpret mysterious phenomena of nature like eclipses, the possession of evil spirits, etc., and when I do this my wonder always is that these men saw as clearly as they did, and succeeded as well as they did in separating the fundamental from the incidental. Difficult as it is to judge the great leaders of the past by their standards rather than by ours, it is imperative that we do so if we are to form any just appreciation of them and of their contributions to the development of the race. Indeed, this is the essence of the whole problem. Once get this point of view and you will never think of asking whether Genesis is to be taken as a modern textbook of *science*. It was written long before there was any such thing as science. It is of the utmost importance from every point of view to realize that the Bible itself makes no claims whatever of *scientific* correctness or, for that matter, of verbal inspiration. It is rather the record of the *religious* experiences and development of a great race.

My fourth obvious fact is that *every one who reflects at all believes in one way or another in God*. From my point of

view, the word atheism is generally used most carelessly, unscientifically, and unintelligently, for it is to me unthinkable that a real atheist should exist at all. I may not, indeed, believe in the conception of deity possessed by the Congo Negro who pounds the tom-tom to drive away the god whose presence and influence he fears, and it is certain also that no modern religious leader believes in the god who has the attributes which Moses, Joshua and the Judges ascribe to their deity. But it seems to me as obvious as breathing that every man who is sufficiently in his senses to recognize his own inability to comprehend the problem of existence, to understand whence he himself came and whither he is going, must in the very admission of that ignorance and finiteness recognize the existence of a Something, a Power, a Being in whom and because of whom he himself "lives and moves and has his being." *That Power, that Something, that Existence, we call God.* Primitive man, of course, had anthropomorphic conceptions of that being. He was not able to think of a god who was very different from himself. His god became angered and had to be appeased, he was jealous and vindictive and moody, but man's conceptions have widened with the process of the suns, and as he has grown up he has slowly been putting away childish things.

I am not much concerned as to whether I agree precisely with you in my conception or not, for "can men with thinking find out God?" Both your conception and mine must in the nature of the case be vague and indefinite. Least of all am I disposed to quarrel with the man who spiritualizes nature and says that God is to him the Soul of the universe, for spirit, personality, and all these abstract conceptions which go with it, like love, duty, and beauty, *exist* for you and for me just as much as do iron, wood, and water. They are in every way as real for us as are the physical things which we handle. No man, therefore, can picture nature as devoid of these attributes which are a part of your experience and mine, and which you and I *know* are in nature. If you, then, in your conception

identify God with nature, you must perforce attribute to him *consciousness* and *personality*, or better, *superconsciousness* and *superpersonality*. You cannot possibly synthesize nature and leave out its most outstanding attributes. Nor can you get these *potentialities* out of nature, no matter how far back you go in time. In other words, materialism, as commonly understood, is an altogether absurd and an utterly irrational philosophy, and is indeed so regarded by most thoughtful men.

Without attempting, then, to go further in defining what in the nature of the case is undefinable, let me reassert my conviction that although you may not believe in some particular conception of God which I may try to give expression to, and although it is unquestionably true that many of our conceptions are sometimes childishly anthropomorphic, every one who is sufficiently in possession of his faculties to recognize his own inability to comprehend the problem of existence bows his head in the presence of the Nature, if you will, the God, I prefer to say, who is behind it all and whose attributes are partially revealed to us in it all, so that it pains me as much as it did Kelvin "to hear crudely atheistic views expressed by men who have never known the deeper side of existence." Let me then henceforth use the word God to describe *that which is behind the mystery of existence and that which gives meaning to it*. I think you will not misunderstand me, then, when I say that I have never known a thinking man who did not believe in God.

| My fifth obvious fact is *that there have been two great influences in the history of the world which have made goodness the outstanding characteristic in the conception of God*. The first influence was Jesus of Nazareth, the second influence has been the growth of modern science and particularly the growth of the theory of evolution. All religions, including Christianity, have impersonated the spirit of evil and the spirit of good, and in many instances the former has been given the controlling influence. All of us see much in life which tends to make us pessimists. The good does not always prevail. Right-

ousness does not always triumph. What is the meaning of existence? Is it worth while? Are we going anywhere? Jesus and modern science have both answered that question in the affirmative—Jesus took it as his mission in life to preach *the news of the goodness of God*. He came in an age which was profoundly ignorant of modern science. He used the terms, in dealing with disease and evil, which were appropriate to his day, the only terms which his audiences could have understood, but he saw a God who was caring for every sparrow and who was working out through love a world planned for the happiness and well-being of all creatures. Similarly science in the formulation of the theory of evolution has seen the world developing through countless ages higher and higher qualities, moving on to better and better things. It pictures God, however you may conceive him, as essentially good, as providing a reason for existence and a motive for making the most of existence, in that we may be a part of the great plan of world progress. No more sublime conception of God has ever been presented to the mind of man than that which is furnished by science when it represents him as revealing himself through countless ages in the development of the earth as an abode for man and in the age-long inbreathing of life into its constituent matter, culminating in man with his spiritual nature and all his godlike powers.

But let me go a step further. Science in bringing to light the now generally admitted, though not as yet obvious and undisputed fact, that this is not a world in which things happen by caprice, but a world governed throughout by law, has presented the most powerful motive to man for goodness which has ever been urged upon him, more powerful even than any which Jesus found. That "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" is no longer merely a biblical text, it is a truth which has been burned into the consciousness of mankind by the last hundred years of the study of physics, chemistry, and biology. Science, then, not only teaches that God is good, but it furnishes man with the most powerful of

motives to fit in with the scheme of goodness which God has provided in nature. It teaches him not only that disease breeds disease, but also, by inference at least, that hate breeds hate, that dishonesty breeds dishonesty, that the wages of sin is death, and on the other hand that love begets love. *It teaches him that the moral laws and the physical laws alike are all laws of nature, and that violations of either of them lead to disaster and to misery.*

In closing this brief statement of the faith of the scientist, let me present a situation and a question. In the spring of 1912 the great ship *Titanic* had collided with an iceberg and was doomed. She was about to sink. The lifeboats were insufficient. The cry went up, "The women first!" The men stepped back. The boats were loaded and the men sank with the ship. You call it an heroic act. Why did they do it? Perhaps you answer, because it was the law of the sea and the men preferred to die rather than to live after having broken that law. Then take a simpler case, for I want a more fundamental answer. Two men were clinging after the wreck to a floating piece of timber. It would not support them both. One of them voluntarily let go and sank. Heroisms of just this sort happened thousands of times during the war. *Men threw away their lives for a cause.* Such events happen every day in times of peace. Why do they happen? Because men and women prefer to die rather than to live in the consciousness of having played the coward, of having failed to play their part worthily *in the great scheme of things.* It is true that not all men are like that, but I am optimist enough to think that most men are. But now come back to the question. Why are most men like that? Simply because *most men believe that there is such a world scheme, that they are a part of it, that their deaths are going to contribute to its development, in short, because most men believe in God.* This is the obvious inference from the fact that men are willing to die for a cause. They may not know whether there is personal immortality for them or not, but they *do know with absolute certainty that they live on in memory and in influence,* many

of them, too, have faith to believe that they live on in consciousness, but in either case they are a part of a plan of development *which gives meaning to life*. In other words, men who have the stuff in them which makes heroes all believe in God, in "a power in the world which makes for righteousness." Without that belief there is no motive for heroism or for self-sacrifices of any sort, nor any such thing as "the development of the consciences, the ideals, and the aspirations of mankind," which I said above was the task of religion, for there is then no basis for ideals or for aspirations. This is why Kelvin said that "belief in God is the foundation of all religion."

If there be a man who does not believe, either through the promptings of his religious faith or through the objective evidence which the evolutionary history of the world offers, in a progressive revelation of God to man, if there be a man who in neither of these two ways has come to feel that there is a meaning to and a purpose for existence, if there be such thoroughgoing pessimism in this world, then may I and mine be kept as far as possible from contact with it. If the beauty, the meaning and the purpose of this life as revealed by both science and religion are all a dream, then let me dream on forever!

#### TOPIC OUTLINE

*Thesis* Because both are necessary and important factors in the progress of civilization, science and religion, far from being antagonistic, are mutually helpful aids to man in his struggle for betterment

#### I Introduction Status of controversy between science and religion

##### A Attitude of religious people

- 1 Medieval churchmen
- 2 St Augustine
- 3 Effect of this attitude

##### B Attitude of scientists

- 1 Literal interpretation of Bible
- 2 Ignorance of meaning of religion



- II Lack of conflict between science and religion
  - A Attitude of scientists toward religion
    - 1 In the past
    - 2 At present
  - B Attitude of religious people toward science
    - 1 Jesus
    - 2 John Wesley
    - 3 Recent leaders
- III Impossibility of conflict between science and religion
  - A Purpose of science in human life
    - 1 Need of science for religion
    - 2 Benefit of religion to science
  - B Purpose of religion in human life
    - 1 Essential teachings of Jesus
    - 2 Loss of real nature of religion under "trappings"
- IV. Evolutionary development of science and religion from crude beginnings
  - A Growth of science
  - B Growth of religion
  - C. Religion and cultural development
    - 1 Ideal of God in Old Testament
    - 2 Ideal of God in New Testament
  - D Bible religious, not scientific book
- V. General belief in God
  - A Individual differences
    - 1 Modern civilized man and the Congo Negro
    - 2 Modern religious leaders and those of Old Testament
    - 3 Belief in spiritualized nature
  - B General agreement, in spite of differences
- VI Belief of both religion and science in goodness as outstanding characteristic of God
  - A Central idea of Jesus's teaching
  - B Implication of modern science, especially evolution
    - 1 Sublime conception of God in evolutionary development
    - 2 Science as motive for goodness
- VII Conclusion Religion and evolution as progressive revelations of God to man
  - A Men's belief in their part in great scheme of things.

## PARAGRAPH OUTLINE

*Thesis* Because both are necessary and important factors in the progress of civilization, science and religion, far from being antagonistic, are mutually helpful aids to man in his struggle for betterment

- I Introduction Both religious and scientific people, through a misunderstanding of science and religion, respectively, have brought up a controversy resting on a false basis
- II As shown by the beliefs of the greatest scientists and the greatest religious leaders, there is no conflict between science and religion, when each is properly understood
- III Because of the different purposes of science and religion, there can be no conflict between them Science has the task of developing "a knowledge of the facts, the laws, and the processes of nature" Religion has the more important task of developing "the consciences, the ideals, and the aspirations of mankind"
- IV "Both science and religion have reached their present status through a process of development from the crudest beginnings" Religion can rise no higher than the stage of development of the people whose ideals it expresses
- V In spite of differences of opinion among individuals, races, and periods of history, all people believe in some sort of a God
- VI Religion and science agree in the idea of goodness as the outstanding characteristic in the conception of God Jesus taught this truth The growth of modern science, especially the theory of evolution, has implied the same idea
- VII Conclusion Religious faith and the evolutionary history of the earth agree in presenting a progressive revelation of God to man Most men believe that they are a part of a great scheme of things, they see a purpose and meaning behind the universe

## SENTENCE OUTLINE

*Thesis* Because both are necessary and important factors in the progress of civilization, science and religion, far from being an-

tagonistic, are mutually helpful aids to man in his struggle for betterment

I Introduction The present controversy between science and religion rests upon misunderstanding on both sides

A Some religious people have condemned science upon a false basis

1 Medieval churchmen persecuted Galileo over a scientific problem with which religion had nothing to do

2 Previously, about 400 A D, St Augustine recognized the existence of two distinct lines of thought, the natural and the spiritual

a He said Christians should not talk about matters of which they knew nothing

3 This controversy with science is harming the church

a It is introducing a disintegrating influence

B Some scientists also are to blame for the misunderstanding

1 Like certain religious people, they believe in a literal interpretation of the Bible

2 As certain religious people are ignorant of science, certain scientists are ignorant of the true meaning of religion

II When each is correctly understood, there is no conflict between science and religion

A The greatest men of science have believed in religion

1 In the past, Newton, Faraday, Maxwell, Kelvin, Lord Raleigh, and Pasteur, among others, have held deep religious convictions

2 At the present time, Charles D Walcott, Henry Fairfield Osborn, John C Merriam, Michael Pupin, James R Angell, and many others are men of faith

B The greatest religious leaders have been friendly toward science

1 Jesus himself said "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"

2 John Wesley, founder of the Methodist church, apparently believed in evolution

3 Recent religious leaders, such as Drummond, Beecher, Abbott, and Fosdick "have seen science and religion as

twin sisters which are effectively cooperating in leading the world on to better things ”

III Because of the different places they occupy in human life, there can be no conflict between science and religion

A “The purpose of science is to develop a knowledge of the facts, the laws, and the processes of nature ”

1 Science without religion may become a curse rather than a blessing to mankind

2 “Science dominated by the spirit of religion is the key to the progress and the hope of the future ”

B “The even more important task of religion is to develop the consciences, the ideals, and the aspirations of mankind ”

1 The life and teachings of Jesus constitute all that is essential to Christianity

2 The real nature of religion has been buried under theologies and external trappings

IV “Both science and religion have reached their present status through a process of development from the crudest beginnings ”

A This fact is universally recognized in the case of science

B A comparison of primitive and modern religion will show through the ages the same ideas of duty and responsibility but great changes in the motives of right conduct

C “Religion cannot possibly rise higher than the stage of development of the people of whose ideals it is the expression ”

1 The Old Testament revealed a God benevolent and just toward his own people, but vindictive and cruel toward others

2 The New Testament revealed the all-embracing love and fatherhood preached by Jesus

D The Bible, making no claims to scientific correctness, is “the record of the *religious* experience and development of a great race ”

V “Any one who reflects at all believes in one way or another in God ”

A We do not agree in our ideas of God

- 1 My concept differs from that of the Congo Negro
  - 2 No modern religious leader believes in the God of the Old Testament
  - 3 Some people spiritualize nature and say that God is the Soul of the universe
  - B Though all do not agree as to the nature of God, all must recognize "that which is behind the mystery of existence and which gives meaning to it"
- VI Both religion and science have made goodness the outstanding characteristic in the conception of God
- A In the religious world Jesus preached the goodness of God
  - B In the scientific world the growth of modern science, especially the theory of evolution, has brought out the same idea
    - 1 No more sublime conception of God has been presented to man's mind than that of science, representing God as revealing himself through countless ages in the development of the earth as an abode for man
    - 2 Science has presented the most powerful motive for goodness that man has known
      - a It teaches that violations of moral and physical laws of nature lead to disaster and misery
- VII Conclusion Religious faith and the evolutionary history of the earth both give a progressive revelation of God to man, a purpose and meaning behind the universe
- A Most men believe in some great scheme of things of which they are a part
    1. This belief is shown in their willingness to throw away their lives for a cause
      - a. Example Heroic deaths, as in the sinking of the *Titanic* and during the war, prove this willingness

## A Father to His Freshman Son<sup>1</sup>

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EDWARD SANDFORD MARTIN

Edward Sanford Martin (1856- ) is the author of a number of volumes of poetry and prose, especially biography and the familiar essay. He is the writer of the "Editor's Easy Chair" department of *Harper's Magazine*. The following essay is a good example of rather formal subject matter treated in familiar style.

NO DOUBT, my son, you have got out of me already what there was to help or mar you. You are eighteen years old and have been getting it, more or less and off and on, for at least seventeen of those years. I regret the imperfections of the source. No doubt you have recognized them. To have a father who is attentive to the world, indulgent to the flesh, and with a sort of kindness for the Devil—dear son, it is a good deal of a handicap! Be sure I make allowances for you because of it. *Ex eo fonte*—*fons*, masculine, as I remember, *fons* and *mons* and *pons*, and one other. Should the pronoun be *illo*? As you know, I never was an accurate scholar, and I suppose you're not—*Ex eo fonte* the stream is bound to run not quite clear.

My advice to you is quite likely to be bad, partly from the imperfection of its source, partly because I am not you, and partly because of my imperfect acquaintance with the conditions you are about to meet. When I came to college my father gave me no advice. He gave me his love and some necessary money, which did not come, I fear, as easy as the love. His venerable uncle who lived with us—my great uncle—

<sup>1</sup>From *The Atlantic Monthly*. Reprinted with the kind permission of the author and The Atlantic Monthly Company.

gave me his blessing and told me, I remember, that so far as book-learning went, I could learn as much without going to college. Still he did not discourage my going. He was quite right. I could have got more book-learning out of college than I did get in college, and I suppose that you, too, might get, out, more than you will get, in. Of course, that's not the whole story, neither is it true of all people. For me, college abounded in distractions, and I suppose it will for you. And I was incorrigibly sociable and ready to spend time to get acquainted, and more, to stay acquainted, and if you have that propensity you needn't think it was left on the doorstep. You come by it lawfully. Getting acquainted is, for most of us, one of the important branches. But it's only one of them, and to devote one's whole time to it is a mistake, and one that the dean will help you avoid if necessary, which probably, if I know you at all, it won't be.

It is important to know people, but it is more important to be worth knowing. College offers you at least two valuable details of opportunity: a large variety of people to know, and a large variety of means to make yourself better worth knowing. I hope, my son, that you will avail yourself of both these details.

This is a mechanical age, and the most obtrusive of the current mechanisms is the automobile. It has valves and cylinders and those things that give it power and speed, and rubber tires that it runs on, and a wheel and steering-gear and handles and treadles by which it is directed. Your body, especially your stomach, is the rubber tires, your brains are the cylinders and valves, and your will and the spiritual part of you are the chauffeur and his wheel.

I beg you to be kind to your stomach, as heretofore. It needs no alcohol at your time of life—if ever—and the less you find occasion to feed into it, the more prosperous both your physical and mental conditions are likely to be. I am aware that life, and college life in particular, has its convivial intervals, but you might as well understand (and I have been remiss,

or have wasted time, if you do not understand it already) that alcohol is one of the chief man-traps, abounding in mischiefs if you play with it too hard. Be wary, always wary, with it, my son, and especially with hard liquor.

Your mind, like your body, is a thing whereof the powers are developed by effort. That is a principal use, as I see it, of hard work in studies. Unless you train your body you can't be an athlete, and unless you train your mind you can't be much of a scholar. The four miles an oarsman covers at top speed is in itself nothing to the good, but the physical capacity to hold out over the course is thought to be of some worth. So a good part of what you learn by hard study may not be permanently retained, and may not seem to be of much final value, but your mind is a better and more powerful instrument because you have learned it. "Knowledge is power," but still more the faculty of acquiring and using knowledge is power. If you have a trained and powerful mind, you are bound to have stored it with something, but its value is more in what it can do, what it can grasp and use, than in what it contains, and if it were possible, as it is not, to come out of college with a trained and disciplined mind and nothing useful in it, you would still be ahead, and still, in a manner, educated. Think of your mind as a muscle to be developed, think of it as a search-light that is to reveal the truth to you, and don't cheat it or neglect it.

As to competitive scholarship, to my mind it is like competitive athletics,—good for those who have the powers and like the game. Tests are useful, they stimulate one's ambition, and so do competitions. But a success in competitive scholarship, like a success in competitive athletics, may, of course, be too dearly bought. Not by you, though, I surmise, my son. If you were more urgent, either as a scholar or as an athlete, I might think it needful to warn you not to wear your tires out scorching too early in life. As things are, I say to you, as I often say to myself. Don't dawdle, don't scramble. When you work,



work, when you play, play, when you rest, rest, and think all the time

When you get hold of an instructor who is worth attention, give him attention That is one way of getting the best that a college has to offer A great deal you may get from books, but some of the most valuable things are passed from mind to mind, and can only be had from some one who has them, or else from the great Source of all truth I suspect that the subtle development we call "culture" is one of those things, and the great spiritual valuables are apt to come that way

You know you are still growing, both in mind and body, and will continue so to be for years to come,—I hope, always One of the valuable things about college is that it gives you time to grow You won't have to earn any money and will have time to think and get acquainted with yourself and others, as well as with some of the wisdom that is spread upon the records You would be so engaged, more or less, in these years, wherever you might be But in college, where you are so much your own man, and are freed from the demands and solicitudes of your parents, the conditions for it are exceptionally favorable I suppose that is one thing that continues the colleges in business, since I read so often that at present they are entirely misdirected and teach the wrong things in the wrong way

But nobody denies that they give the young a breathing spell Breathe, my son, breathe freely Remember that the aim of all these prospective processes is to bring out the man there is in you, and arm him more or less for the jousts ahead It is not to make you over into somebody else that can't be done,—not in three or four years, anyhow, but only to bring out, and train as much as possible of you There's plenty in most of us if we can only get it out, more, very much more, than we ever do get out So will you please think of college as a nursery in which you are to grow awhile,—and mind you do grow,—and then, presently, to be transplanted It is not as if college was the chief arena of human effort. Nevertheless, for your effort,

while you are there, it is the chief arena, and I am far from giving you the counsel to put off trying until you leave

I hear a good deal about clubs and societies how many there are, how important they are, how it is that, if a youth shall gain the whole of scholarship and all athletics and not "make" a proper club, he shall still fall something short of success in college Parents I meet who are more concerned about clubs than about either scholarship or deportment They are concerned and at the same time bothered so many strategies and chances the clubs involve, so bad it may be to be in this one, so bad to be out of that, so much choice there is between them, and so much choice exercised within them, by which any mother's hopeful may be excluded

There is a democratic ideal of a great college without any clubs, where the lion and the lamb shall escort one another about with tails entwined, and every student shall be like every other student, and have similar habits and associates This ideal is a good deal discussed and a good deal applauded in the public press Whether it will ever come true I can't tell, but there has been some form or other of clubs in our older colleges, I suppose, for one or two centuries, and they are there now and will at least last out your time, so it may be you will have to take thought about them in due time

Not much, however, until they take thought of you

You see, clubs seem to be a sort of natural provision, just as tails were, maybe, before humanity outgrew them I guess there is a propensity of nature toward groups, and the natural basis of grouping seems to be likeness in feathers and habits The propensity works to include the like and, incidentally but necessarily, to exclude the unlike Whether it is the Knights of the Round Table or the Knights of the Garter or the Phi Beta Kappa, you see these principles working The measure of success in a club is its ability to make people want to join it, and that seems to be best demonstrated and preserved by keeping most of them out

Now the advantages of the clubs are considerable To have

a place always open where you can hang up your hat, and where a hospitable welcome always awaits you, and where there is enough of a crowd and not too much, and where you can in your later years inspect at all times a family of selected undergraduates,—all that is valuable and good, and pleasant besides, and this continuity of interest that the clubs foster among their members helps to keep up in those members a lively and helpful interest in their college. The drawback to the clubs is their essential selfishness, and their disposition to take you out of a large family and limit you to a small one, and one that is not yours by birth, or entirely by choice, but is selected for you largely by other persons.

In any club you yield a certain amount of freedom and individuality, the amount being determined by the degree in which the club absorbs you. Don't yield too much! Don't take the mould of any club! A college is always bigger than its clubs, and the biggest thing in a college is always a man. The object of being in college is to develop as a man. If clubs help in that development,—and I think they do help some men,—they are a gain, but, of course, if they dwarf you down to the dimensions of a club-man, they are a loss. Some men take their club-shape, such as it is, and find a sufficient satisfaction in it. Others react on their clubs, take what they have to give, add to it what is to be had elsewhere, and turn out rather more valuable people than if they had had no club experience.

At all events, don't take this matter of the clubs too hard. For those youths, comparatively few, who by luck and circumstances find themselves eligible to them, they are an interesting form of discipline or indulgence, and I will not say that they are unimportant. Neither would I have you keep out of them because of their drawbacks. If you begin by keeping out of all things that have drawbacks, your progress in this world will involve constant hesitations. Alcohol has numerous drawbacks, but I don't advise you to be a teetotaller. Tobacco has drawbacks, but I believe you smoke it. Money has drawbacks, and so has advertisement. But, bless you, we have to take

things as they come and deal with them as we can. The trick is to get the kernel and eliminate the shuck. A large proportion of people do the opposite. If you can manage that way with the clubs,—provided you ever get a chance,—you will be amused to observe in due time how large a proportion of your brethren value these organizations chiefly for their shuck, and grasp most eagerly at that. For the shuck, as I see it, is exclusiveness, which is not valuable except to persons justly doubtful of their own merits. Whereas the kernel is the fellowship of like minds which has always been treasured by the wise.

The clubs, my son, some more than others, are recruited considerably from what is known as the leisure class. To be sure, I don't see any very definite or important leisure class about in our land. Everybody who amounts to anything works, and always did and must, for you can't amount to anything otherwise, but the people who have money laid up ahead for them, are apt to work somewhat less strenuously than the rest of us, and not so much for money. Don't get it into your head that you want to tie up to the leisure class, or that the condition of not having to work is desirable. Have it in mind that you are to work just about as hard as the quality of your tires and cylinders will warrant. Plan to get into the game if you have to go on your hands and knees. Plan to earn your living somehow. Don't aim to go through life spoon-fed, don't aim to get a soft seat. If you do, you won't have your fair share of fun. There is no real fun in ease, except as you need it because you have worked hard.

I say, plan to earn your living! Whether you actually earn the money you live on, makes no great difference, though in your case I guess you'll have to if you are going to live at all well. But if you get money without earning it, it leaves you in debt to society. Somebody has to earn the money you spend. In mine, factory, railroad, or office, somebody works for the money that supports you. No matter where the money comes from, that is true, somebody has to earn it. If you get it without due labor of your own, you owe for it. Recognize that

debt and qualify yourself to discharge it Study to put back into the world somewhat more than you take out of it Study to be somewhat more than merely worth your keep Study to shoulder the biggest load your strength can carry That is life That is the great sport that brings the great compensations to the soul Getting regular meals and nice clothes, and acceptable shelter and transportation, and agreeable acquaintances, is only a means to an end, and if you accept the means and shirk the end, the means will pall on you

I said "agreeable acquaintances" A very large proportion of the acquaintances you can make will be agreeable if you can bring enough knowledge and a sufficiently hospitable spirit to your relations with them I don't counsel you to cultivate the arts of popularity, for they are apt not to wash,—apt, that is, to conflict with inside qualities that are vastly more valuable than they are But keep, in so far as you can, an open heart There is no one to whom you are not related if only you can find the relation, there is no one but you owe him a benefit if you can see one you can do him

Don't be too nice It is such an impediment to usefulness as stuttering is to speech,—a sort of spiritual indigestion, a hesitation in your carburetor By all means, be a gentleman, in manners and spirit, in so far as you know how, but be one from the inside, out

If you had come as far as you have in life without acquiring manners, you might well blush for your parents and teachers I don't think you have, but I beg you hold on to all the good manners you have, and get more Good manners seem to me a good deal to seek among present-day youth, but I suppose they have always been fairly scarce, and the more appreciated for their scarcity Tobacco manners are uncommonly free and bad in this generation, more so, I think, than they were in mine Since cigarettes came in, especially, youths seem to feel licensed to smoke them in all places and company And the boys are prone to too much ease of attitude, and lounge and loll appallingly in company, and I see them in parlors with

their legs crossed in such a fashion that their feet might almost as well be in the ladies' laps

Have a care for these matters of deportment Be strict with yourself and your postures Keep your legs and feet where they belong, they were not meant for parlor ornaments Show respect for people! Lord bless me! the things I see done by males with a claim to be gentlemen tobacco-smoke puffed in women's faces, men who ought to know better, smoking as they drive out with ladies, men who put their feet on the table and expect you to talk over them! Show respect for people, for all kinds of people, including yourself, for self-respect is at the bottom of all good manners They are the expression of discipline, of good-will, of respect for other people's rights and comfort and feelings I suppose good manners are unselfish, but the most selfish people might well cultivate them, they are so remunerative In the details of life, in the public vehicles, in crowds, and in all situations where the demand presses hard on supply, what you get by hogging is incomparably less than what you get by courtesy The things you must scramble and elbow for are not worth having, not one of them They are the swill of life, my son, leave them to swine

You will have to think more or less about yourself, because that belongs to your time of life, provided you are the sort that thinks at all But don't overdo it You won't, because you will find it, as all healthy people do, a subject in which over-indulgence tends rapidly to nausea To have one's self always on one's mind is to lodge a kill-joy, to act always from calculation is a sure path to blunders

Most of these specific counsels I set down more for your entertainment than truly to guide you You don't live by maxims any more than you speak by rules of grammar You will speak by ear (improving, I hope, in your college environment), and you will live by whatever light there is in you, getting more, I hope, as you go along

Grow in grace, my son! If your spirit is right, the details of

life will take care of their own adjustment Go to church, if not invariable, than variably They don't require it any more in college, but you can't afford not to, for the churches reflect and recall—very imperfectly, to be sure—the religion and the spirit of Christ, and on that the whole of our civilization rests Get understanding of that It is by far the most important knowledge in the whole book, the great fountain of sanity, tolerance, and political and social wisdom, a gateway to all kinds of truth, a rectifying and consoling current through all of life

## Are American Colleges Wasteful?<sup>1</sup>

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W A NEILSON

W A Neilson (1869- ) since 1917 has been President of Smith College Previous to this time, he was Professor of English at Columbia, and held the same position at Harvard Much of his published work has been confined to literature and includes *Origins and Sources of the Court of Love*, *Essentials of Poetry*, and *A History of English Literature*

TO ANY one seeking to learn the attitude of the American people toward higher education at the present time two apparently contradictory phenomena would at once present themselves On the one hand he would find, in both popular and technical publications, abundant criticism of our colleges and universities, and on the other, a great stream of gifts and bequests, astounding to the envious eyes of the academic public in other countries, flowing into the coffers of the institutions for the higher education of men At a time when the dean of one college is telling us that nine-tenths of the students in college should never have been allowed to enter the gates, and Doctor Flexner is proving to us that we have scarcely a genuine university in our land, Harvard received in one year gifts of over fifteen million dollars What is the explanation of this strange paradox? Are the critics all wrong, or are people of wealth so careless of the ultimate disposition of their means that they give them without thought to wasteful and inefficient stewards? The critics seem sometimes to be men in a position to know what they are speaking about, yet our millionaires are not in general reckless in the bestowal of their accumulations

<sup>1</sup> From *Scribners Magazine* Reprinted with the kind permission of the author and Charles Scribner's Sons



Moreover, gifts to colleges are by no means all from the very rich, many come from alumni of moderate and even small means, and would seem to imply a gratitude for something received at college which they at least believe real and valuable. Doctor Flexner himself spent many years in the service of a great foundation, most of whose benefactions went to the very institutions which he now attacks. Were these benefactions made in the teeth of his advice, or did he only gradually come to realize how bad the universities are?

In view of the agreement of our wise men in the need for "direction and enlightenment" for the dissipation of the confusion of our time, it is important that we should find out whether we are wasting our resources on the institutions which should be a main source of such direction and enlightenment. To do this we must first scrutinize the charges that are brought against them and see whether there has not been some failure to discriminate among institutions of varying types facing varying conditions, and, secondly, we must come to an understanding as to the function which needs to be performed by the American college, taking into account the peculiar cultural conditions obtaining in the United States at their present stage of development.

It is useless to lump together the State universities and the endowed institutions, the co-educational and the separate colleges, those with examining and those with certificating methods of admission, and attempt to generalize. Some characteristics, of course, they have in common, but their differences in the matters under discussion are more important than their likenesses.

Perhaps the commonest charge is that the American mania for mass production has invaded education. This would seem to mean that we are turning out huge numbers of graduates, that we are turning them out all alike, and that the methods are mechanical and ignore individual differences. With the question of sheer numbers I shall deal later. Meantime let us

recall the fact that after the war, without invitation on the part of the colleges, they were suddenly flooded with a vast increase of applicants. This has been supposed to have been due in part to the apparently greater adaptability of the college-bred in meeting the emergencies of 1917-1918—or in lower terms, to the fact that the college-bred easily became officers, while the graduates of the public schools filled the ranks. Whatever the explanations, the State universities, which bore the main stress of this period, made valiant efforts to meet the occasion, and they can hardly be blamed if for a year or two they were unable to enlist adequate staffs, that classes grew too large, and that they were forced to employ some wholesale methods. Soon, however, they began to get control of the situation, and both in them and in the private colleges the outstanding feature of educational progress these last ten years has been the attempt, attended by no small degree of success, to take individual differences into account as never before. Greater freedom and special opportunities for talented students, placement tests designed to avoid the slowing of pace through poor grading, personnel departments and a score of other devices to diagnose intellectual and emotional hindrances and provide guidance for the individual, reduction in the size of classes, more effort to induce the student to assume the burden of his own education—these are only some of the means employed to avoid mechanical standardization and the methods of the factory. It is fair to say that in the face of the greater difficulty created by the growth in numbers, the colleges are much less open to the charge of mass education than before the war.

It is said that the American college admits indiscriminately good students and hopeless ones, and clogs its machinery with unfit raw material. Here it is necessary to discriminate. The State universities by their constitutions and their political conditions would, I believe, admit that they find themselves less able to select than they would wish, and they seek to correct the result by a heavy slaughter of freshmen. This is expensive,

but in view of the inescapable difficulties of finding an infallible test of "good college material," a trial freshman year is perhaps not the least fair method of determining who shall have the chance of going through college. The stronger private colleges have for years limited the size of their entering classes, and have spent and are spending endless pains on the problem of a wise selection. The varying standards of schools, the difference in home conditions and the possibility of quite another showing when the student is freed from the home atmosphere, the difference in the age at which intellectual power and curiosity show themselves in different students, the effect of the stimulus of new subjects and new methods of study in college—these are some of the factors that will probably always balk our efforts to make our selecting procedures perfect. If that is so, it is on the whole better that ten per cent of an entering class should be unwisely admitted than that five per cent should be unwisely excluded. Most unwise admissions are corrected within the first year, an unwise exclusion may work irreparable injustice.

The charge is made that in the American college the students are chiefly interested in extra-curricular activities, and that the intellectual life is rarely pursued for its own sake. The truth of this varies from place to place and from period to period; no one knows enough colleges to be justified in making the generalizations so frequently heard. It is true that for a long stretch of years the aiming of the teaching at a rather low average intelligence left the quicker students with so much leisure that they were fain to fill it with an endless variety of clubs and recreations. It is true that those whose time was needed for study sought a share in these activities which they could not afford. But the introduction of the methods already referred to for dealing with individual differences has already had a substantial effect on the overemphasis on organizations outside the classroom and the library, and it is less and less common for the student who wishes to pursue intellectual interests to have to apologize for his or her tastes. The baleful influence

of inter-collegiate athletics, however, is still dominant, to the shame of the men's colleges. The problem has been solved by the women's institutions, which succeed in creating an all but universal habit of exercise—far in excess of that of most men's colleges—without a stadium or an extramural contest. Part of the blame must be borne by faculties and administrators, but the chief responsibility lies with the public and the alumni.

It is frequently said that the colleges have failed to define clearly what they mean by education, and that they do not really know what they are trying to do. Every year a dozen new college presidents present their aims to the public, and no attempt at a new definition will be made here. But an examination of current curricula presents a clear enough picture of what the opportunities are which are offered to the American undergraduate. He is introduced, either by orientation courses or by a compulsory distribution of his choices in the earlier years, to the main fields of knowledge, so that he may not select a subject for specialization without some idea of what lies outside it. He is usually required to concentrate in something sufficiently to carry him well beyond its elementary stages, and for this concentration is offered a choice from the whole range of cultural studies. He is given opportunity to acquire the tools for more advanced study, to learn to express himself clearly, to find his way about a library, to get at the published facts in any subject, to think logically and suspend judgment till all sides of a question are before him, and to work and play with other people. This indicates pretty fairly what the colleges mean by education, and it is neither vague nor contemptible. Of course, few if any students seize all the opportunities, and many seize only a few of them. But this has always been so in every country, yet the world retains faith in education.

The question remains as to whether all is done that might be done to prevent educational wastes, whether the country is getting the maximum of "direction and enlightenment" from its places of learning. The answer must be negative. A great

many reasons could be given, but there is one more important than all others. By far the greatest difficulty college administrators have to meet is that of building up an adequate staff, because there are not nearly enough first-rate teachers to go round. The art of teaching is a difficult one, requiring solid learning, imagination, the power of arousing curiosity, the faculty of clear exposition, industry, patience, enthusiasm either for a subject or for the young, and a sympathetic personality. Such qualities are highly marketable, and many departments of life compete for them. Education unfortunately cannot bid high enough to get as much of them as it needs. Too often, "the hungry sheep look up and are not fed", oftener still, the sheep fail to receive a much needed appetizer. It does not solve our problem to say that those without appetite had better stay away. The country needs "direction and enlightenment", perhaps, first, it needs the desire to be directed and enlightened, which brings me back to the postponed question of numbers.

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If one talks with a European scholar who is lecturing for the first time in an American college and exerts the slight pressure necessary to extract a candid opinion of our academic institutions, one is almost sure to be told that he is disappointed in the average quality of our students. Pressed farther, he will admit that the best of them are as good as any in mental equipment, but that even these often show a rather poor background of general culture. He will think (but probably not say) much the same of our professors. On the basis of these observations, if his stay is short, he will probably go home and report on American civilization. His observations will not be far wrong, yet his report will be quite misleading.

The educational programme of any country should be related to the needs of that country, to its present state of cultivation, and to the constitution and movement of its society. The society of the United States is exceedingly mobile, with a high standard of living and an increasing margin of

leisure, with a road from poverty to riches much travelled in both directions. In contrast, the society of the older European countries is static and, in spite of democratic advance still largely dominated by caste. Most, though not all, of the students of their universities either belong to the aristocracy and gentry, or come from the families of officials and professional men, and are preparing to follow in the footsteps of their fathers. The average of culture they bring from their homes is therefore relatively high. With us, on the contrary, the students come from all classes, and they are in proportion to population ten times as many. A fair comparison of average level of scholastic ability with the university men of France and Germany should take into account only the top tenth of American students. As for background, the explanation is obvious. Even in the case of many who come from homes of wealth, the material means of refinement have been in their possession for only a part of the lives of their parents, and in the case of others, they frequently get a college education at the cost of privation and overwork, both on their own part and that of their families, who may not even speak our language.

But, it may be asked, why seek to educate ten times as many? Why dilute the academic population with so many of inferior quality? Why not reserve the privilege of a college education for a carefully chosen élite, so that our resources in equipment and in really good teachers might be more nearly adequate, the campus atmosphere become really intellectual, and the benefit to the country be equally great and much less costly?

One fundamental reason why we seek to educate so many is that we have not yet abandoned the democratic ideal. As a nation we still believe that culturally as well as politically and economically the road should be open to ability and industry. We know that our leaders have by no means always come from those born to wealth and privilege, and we believe that to reserve educational opportunity in general for a small class is to weaken the country and do injustice to the individual.

Whether these beliefs are well based or no, there are other reasons to be adduced in support of our policy. One is that, as a matter of history, possessors of wealth have always influenced for good or ill the progress of art and science and the level of taste. We must educate their heirs in self-defense. Another is that we have universal suffrage, and we must produce as many enlightened citizens as possible, again in self-defense. In both cases we must now include women. In matters of taste they are immensely more important to our society than men, in matters of politics they are becoming more influential every day. Two instances occur to me as I write. We are told that it was the women of Seaham who gave Ramsay MacDonald last October a victory whose effect on the whole world it is impossible to estimate, and Mr. Hoover has broken all precedent in sending the woman president of a woman's college to the Disarmament Conference.

All this does not mean that the colleges must throw their doors open to all comers. We must go on laboring at the problems of selection of the best risks, as we must go on with a hundred other educational problems. But it does mean that our high level of material well-being gives us the possibility and imposes on us the duty of providing a longer period of education for a greater proportion of our population than the older peoples have thought possible or desirable. We must learn to spend our wealth on things that are worth while, we must learn to employ our leisure in a fashion to enrich our lives, and, perhaps most important of all, we must sharpen and inform as many minds as we can in the hope of finding leaders who can direct us, and of training a public sufficiently enlightened to follow them when they are found.

## The Great God Football<sup>1</sup>

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JOHN R. TUNIS

John R. Tunis has been connected with the sports staff of the *New York Evening Post* since 1925, and has contributed articles on various phases of athletics to many of the leading magazines

RETURNING lettermen are Nagurski, Kabela, Hovde, Likesells, Brookmeier, Westphal, Pulbrabek, and Teeter. Emlein and Ukkelberg will supplant Apman and Angevik, and Norgaard and Burquist will provide promising material to guard the flanks."

No, this is not, as you might imagine, a list of future citizens of these United States who have passed or are about to pass the rigid requirements of the Quota, but simply a sample of up-to-date football publicity sent out last summer by one of our larger Middle Western state universities.

At present every college worthy of the name of an educational institution maintains a press bureau whose function is to keep the name of the university before the public gaze. This is successfully accomplished not merely by issuing bulletins of the academic progress of the organization—for after all education is a matter in which but few of us are interested—but chiefly by bombarding the press of the land with minute and detailed references to the athletic activities of the university in question, and particularly to its football eleven. Moreover, no longer do these press bureaus wait until the opening of the doors of learning to begin grinding out material for publication. Heavens, no! The advance notices from college press agents start pouring in upon the helpless sporting editors of the

<sup>1</sup> From *Harper's Magazine*. Reprinted by permission of the author.



nation's newspapers as early as mid-August. By Labor Day the campaign is on in earnest, and the sports pages are full of "Intensive Training to Start To-day," and "Preliminary Practice Begins at Notre Dame," or "University of Pennsylvania Squad Takes to Seashore for Early Conditioning." While vacation throngs are starting back to city homes, bits of pre-season comment such as the following may be culled from any newspaper:

Farmington, L. I.—Comparative quiet settled over the New York University football training camp here today after the arrival and opening workout. But the coaching faculty [a descriptive title, this] admitted this evening that the quiet is no more than a Sabbath lull before a gridiron storm of incessant drilling tomorrow.

Truly an apt analogy. And midsummer is merely the Sabbath lull before the storm of football propaganda from the colleges and technical schools and high schools, and even the schools for the training of officers for our Army and Navy. The volume and stridency of the propaganda steadily increases as the practice sessions become more stern and important in late September, as the early-season games begin in October, and as the end of the year and the "crucial contest"—for nowadays every big football game is a "crucial contest"—approach in the first weeks of November. By this time the sporting pages of the American newspapers have been filled for months with columns of football news and comment, relevant and irrelevant. By this time the chaff has been fairly well separated from the wheat, and the winning teams—as true sports-lovers of the most sports-loving nation in the world, we obviously have no use for the losers—have been classified, ticketed and documented. There are the Eastern teams, as a rule of small account in the final reckoning, the teams of the Western Conference, the Pacific Coast Conference, the Missouri Valley Conference, the Southwestern Conference, the Oklahoma Conference, the Rocky Mountain Conference, and a dozen other conferences

large and small, important and unimportant from a sporting viewpoint. There are also several roving teams that make a business, a regular profession of football.

These roving teams are delightfully and refreshingly frank about the game, making no pretenses at all that their halfbacks are members of Phi Beta Kappa, nor do they seek to deny that their coach, with the help of an agile newspaper writer six hundred miles away, syndicates his views in the sports pages daily throughout the land to his own profit. There is no pretense made that he is hired to be the moral guardian of the football squad, no twaddle about the manner in which through his precept and example he influences "his boys" for Christian good. No, these teams are a rough and ready lot. They do not intend to allow the abnormal functions of a university such as lectures and study to interfere with football. On a Saturday one of these elevens will play in Portland, Oregon, the players will dress hastily and catch the evening express from the Coast an hour after the game, in time to run out upon the Yankee Stadium, New York, the following Saturday afternoon. They practice by throwing footballs at one another as they tramp from diners to sleepers, or vice versa. Their studies, if any, are broadcast to them by radio, yet their degrees are rendered to them at the proper moment—which is to say when their football usefulness to the university is at an end. Much of this, perhaps more, you may learn if you wish, in fact whether you wish or not, by opening the sporting pages of any American newspaper between September and Christmas in any given year.

It is obvious that the sporting public wants all this sort of thing or the newspapers would never publish it. Yes, the sporting public does want it, adores all this football news, eats it, swallows it, almost—I was going to say—wallows in it. And no wonder, too, for the truth is that football is today the Great American Game, at least from the spectators' point of view. True, we still hear baseball called our national game. But it is easy to prove the falsity of the statement. Turn back to the

files of any newspaper in early October and you will discover that on the final days of a World's Series there are always seats, and plenty of them, to be obtained. While the novelty lasts, while people are talking baseball, during the first two or three days of the Series, the stands are crowded, but as soon as it drags along over a week-end interest abates and the stands are spotted with empty patches. Whereas football.

A baseball World's Series crowd of eighty thousand is mentioned in the newspaper headlines, on the other hand a football crowd of eighty thousand is a commonplace. At the approximate moment when the Yale Bowl is filled with a gathering of this size, larger numbers are watching Michigan play Illinois at Urbana, Pennsylvania tackle Chicago at Franklin Field, and California play Stanford at Berkeley. For a series of five or six successive Saturdays in October and November each year football proves its right to be called the King of American Sports.

But, as a matter of fact, football is more to the sports follower of this country than merely a game. It is at present a religion—sometimes it seems to be almost our national religion. With fervor and reverence the college man and the non-college man, the athlete and observer approach its shrines, dutifully and faithfully they make their annual pilgrimage to the football Mecca, be it Atlanta or Urbana, Cambridge or Los Angeles, Princeton or Ann Arbor. From far and near they come, the low and the high, the humble in their sports coupés from the neighboring city, the elect in their special cars from all parts of this football-mad nation. (In case you think this to be merely a flight of rhetoric, let me assure you that a railroad official told me during a recent Harvard-Yale game at New Haven that special cars from sixteen different systems were parked in the yards about the station.)

So devoutly does the American sporting Babbitt worship at the shrine that even the ministers of other and older faiths are duly impressed. Thus, for example, Dean Willard Sperry of

the Harvard Theological School was quoted in the press as saying

"The only true religious spirit to be discerned among large bodies of undergraduates today is in the football stadium. One of the deepest spiritual experiences I ever had was one Saturday afternoon a few years ago in the Harvard Stadium. It is just that spirit which transforms football from a form of athletics to a religion, which our universities must diffuse through wider channels."

This new religion has its dogma—the doctrine that only through so-called "college spirit" can a man be saved. According to this doctrine in its purest form, anything done for the purpose of bringing victory to the team is justifiable, any news—learned no matter how—about another eleven, any bit of information garnered publicly or privately must be put to use, any amount of time spent in following and cheering and "supporting" the team counts toward the salvation of the faithful. No less than the undergraduate, the graduate is a traitor to his creed does he fail to turn up in the stadium on the day of days, the Homecoming Day, the Big Game Day, the Day when the college demands his all. So the undergraduate tears away on Thursday afternoon in his rickety flivver to drive the five hundred miles to the town where the big game is to be held, and the graduate comes down by express or special train for the same purpose, and if each has a flask upon his hip—well, anything is excused when one realizes the holy motives pervading their acts on behalf of the dear old college.

The religion of football has its high priests and acolytes, its saints and sanctuaries, as do other religions. The saints are those mighty ones of the game who have gone on, whose names are mentioned with hushed breath by sports writers and football fans alike. The high priests are the saints of the present day, sometime in the future they, too, will have passed away, sometime they, too, will have Memorial Gates and Drives and Locker Buildings constructed in their names and their memory. Today Saint Howard Jones and Saint Fritz Crisler, Saint Louis

Little and Saint Chick Meehan fill the places of the great departed Places which have become more lucrative, let it be added, for today the nest of the high priest is well feathered, and the newspaper ghost-writer and the syndicate manager offer him a means of profit not always open in such measure to the men of the days of Percy Haughton

The acolytes of the religion are of course the players themselves They serve and wait upon the Great God Football in his sanctuaries—the gridirons of school and college These humble flagellants are, need it be said, seldom admitted to the inner holy of holies The hierarchies that rule the game are composed of the Athletic Directors, Graduate Managers, Graduate Treasurers, Chairmen of Football Committees, and the rest who, with the Head Coaches, are merely names for the lowly graduate and undergraduate to bow down before and worship The hierarchies and the Head Coaches look with benign approval upon the solemn hocus-pocus of the new religion, for after all, High Priests like everyone else must eat three times daily

The president of a large college, when he was discussing football informally one day, pointed out a curious thing about this new religion of ours He mentioned man's natural hunger for ritual in one form or another, and remarked that so fundamental is this emotional craving that when our churches do away with ritual—as the Protestants have largely done away with it in the United States—it springs up in other and most unlikely places And certainly nowhere has the love of the average man for ritual been more completely and more fully satisfied than by the rich and intricate ceremony of modern intercollegiate football

This ritual has pervaded the game little by little, a bit here and a bit there, without anyone being fully aware of what was going on, it has become a part of college life without anyone permanently attached to the colleges realizing what has happened, until today it is fixed and standardized from Maine to California Everyone who has attended an American university

large or small is familiar with its manifestations. By way of preparation for the annual football festival there are mass meetings at which the High Priests and Acolytes of the religion speak briefly but passionately and fervently, preaching devotion to the Divine Being. They usually manage to work their audience up to such a pitch that a snake dance follows, headed by the student band playing football songs (which after all are the hymns of the cult), a thousand bareheaded undergraduates swarm across the campus in the dark, swing up Main Street, blocking traffic and pulling the trolleys off the wires, hooting and jeering at the house of Professor Jackson of the Greek Department, who once dared question the sacredness of the gods they worship, and then crowd on to the field back of the gymnasium, where a huge bonfire is lighted and more cheers and songs are heard until everyone is too hoarse and too tired to continue.

And then on Game Day itself, the day of the great festival, there are the bands parading to the field in uniform, the varsity band leading the procession with its stalwart drum major, the freshman band—in costumes somewhat less elaborate—bringing up the rear. There are the frenzied shouts of greeting as the players race upon the field, the cheers for the captain of the team, for the opponents of the day, for the university, these are the opening prayers, as it were, of the ceremony. Then there are the annual demonstrations of ingeniously organized pageantry, always so important a part of this football ritual, the cheering section that on a blast from the directing whistle suddenly spells out CALIFORNIA in vivid colors or that forms a big blue Y or a big red H made up of colored cards or handkerchiefs. There is the marching and countermarching of the bands between the halves, each year their performance becomes more elaborate, each year they add to the traditional rites some new marvel of disciplined display. And if, perhaps, by some lucky chance, the afternoon of the game happens to fall on Armistice Day, so much the better. From the top of the stadium, silhouetted against the dying sun, a bugler in

khaki stands with bugle against his lips. A hush falls upon ninety thousand bareheaded spectators and the piercing notes of taps are scattered over the vast arena, penetrating with an exquisite melancholy the hearts of the worshippers. At long last the game is over, there they stand, uncovered in their temple, chanting their Doxology, their closing words of prayer.

In praise of Old Nassau, my boys  
In praise of Old Nassau

## II

Football today is a complicated affair. Before the time when the merchants of a college town and the Chamber of Commerce subscribed money to the Athletic Association, realizing that a hundred thousand persons in twenty-four hours can leave a good deal of surplus cash about, before the time when big games were called by name to attract given bodies of citizens—Rotary Day, Kiwanis Day, Dad's Day, and so forth—football was a simple business. An old Yale football player relates how when a Blue eleven went to play Harvard at Cambridge one of the players, stopping off at Hartford to visit a young lady, missed the train, and a crew man on the sidelines had to be pressed into service. In those days when it was necessary for an official to take charge, some neutral spectator who happened to be watching was requested to lend his aid. Today the officials—their number has increased until at present there are almost as many officials as players upon the field—are hand-picked for each game by a High Commissioner who receives a salary of ten thousand dollars for the job, a job which does not appear to be working out over well, either. Not long ago more than three thousand dollars was spent for spies to watch the officials and report upon their fairness and the quality of their officiating. The reports, it seems, were not constructive enough, and recently there was talk of spies

being set to watch the spies at an additional cost of three thousand dollars, and so on Truly, a complicated business, this modern football

But football was not always quite so involved In fact it is fair to say that football stole up and caught the colleges unaware, almost before they knew it the vast machine which is modern intercollegiate football had been erected and firmly installed in collegiate life Thirty years ago it was a game Today the colleges are waking up to realize that what they have on their hands is a first-class octopus which is strangling many of the legitimate pursuits of the educational institution As the late President Wilson said before the War

"The side shows are so numerous, so diverting, so important if you will—that they have swallowed up the circus, and those who perform in the main tent must often whistle for their audience, discouraged and humiliated "

This, perhaps, represents the opinion of the average educator I say the average educator, because some college presidents are as completely hypnotized by the effects of football as the most fervent undergraduates But the majority undoubtedly feel it to be harmful, harmful because it gives both to the students and to a public that knows nothing of colleges an entirely wrong idea of the purpose and functions of a great educational institution "Yale," said a nine-year-old boy, "is the college that has good football teams " And many boys five times his age share his belief about Yale University

The purposes of a university and the things a college education accomplish have been defined in many and various ways, but certainly, if four years in a seat of learning has any effect upon its students, it should help them to differentiate between the false and the true, between the sham values of life and the real values Herein lies the greatest objection of the educators to football The religion of football, they argue, teaches the most ephemeral of values, brings into prominence in an intellectual institution men who are looked up to solely on account of their ability to catch a thirty-yard pass or turn an



opposing end and, instead of assisting the undergraduate to distinguish between what is best and what is worthless in life, tends to befuddle his judgment with its hysterical appeals to his emotion and its irrational standards, and by this setting up of false gods may mislead him for years until he learns for himself, in the world without, to distinguish between the things that are of enduring worth and the things that are not

Thus it happens in many a college that even while the Athletic Association is issuing its Daily News Letter to the press of the country, at the very moment when new coaches and assistant coaches and supernumeraries are being hired by those in charge of the game, there is a large and spontaneous, though often unorganized feeling against the whole thing within the campus. In other words, there are in most American colleges to-day two factions—football and anti-football. The football faction is well organized, powerful, articulate, embracing most of the students, the athletic directors, their staffs, many of the influential graduates and members of the Board of Trustees, and occasionally even the president himself. For there is no denying the fact that a winning football eleven is a great help to the president of every college, large or small, endowed or unendowed. Thus the head of a vast state educational factory, who depends upon funds from the annual grant of the state legislature and who must go before them personally each year to plead his cause, will surely find his way smoothed and his path easier if he can point to a winning football team the previous fall, if he can show how much publicity (and, therefore, prestige) the eleven has brought to the great Commonwealth of Illinois (or Nebraska, or Minnesota, or Iowa, or Utah) by its row of triumphs upon the fields of sport. Even the head of a conservative Eastern college richly endowed may also consider a victory in football to his advantage in many ways. The president of a large and ancient university on the Atlantic seaboard said recently in private conversation

"Of course I wish for a victory over Blank more than anyone on the team. Why? Because it means that my work will

be ever so much easier for weeks thereafter, everyone will be in such good humor that things will run much more smoothly and quietly among both students and professors. Yes, more than anyone I want the team to win next Saturday."

But, beside the football faction, there is in every college in the land another faction, smaller, less powerful, vastly less noisy, but, nevertheless, growing rapidly. This faction is anti-football. They deplore sincerely the huge complicated business which is modern football, they regret the extent to which it has grown, and they would like to take steps to change it. Some of them would like to do away with it entirely. Said one President to me not long ago:

"Many thinking graduates, undergraduates, members of the faculty, and college presidents would be happy to see football abolished if it could be done without upsetting the athletic systems of the colleges generally."

Yet so far the anti-football faction has been powerless to act, powerless at any rate to act effectively. Why? Well, suppose you were a college president convinced of the absurdity of the religion of football and desirous of destroying it. How would you proceed?

By a bull, declaring that football was no more? Such a step would be condemned to futility from the outset. Most outsiders do not realize that the college president of 1928 is not an autocrat. Like the president of a large corporation or the President of the United States, he has very limited authority, like all presidents, he is responsible to others. To a Board of Trustees, to an Alumni Committee, to some body of graduates who, if they do not actually control many of his actions, at least are able to throw stumbling blocks in the way of his desired reforms.

But let us suppose that he does make a gesture against football. Even if it is a constructive gesture, such as Dr. Hopkins made a year or two ago by suggesting that football be limited to the two upper classes, pressure will immediately be brought to bear to frustrate his attempt. The President will suddenly

find many forces arranged against him. The graduate who is head of the railroad system that transports thousands of people to the stadium every Saturday, the graduate who is connected with a corporation that benefits by the presence of eighty thousand persons in town one day a week, the graduate who cares nothing for the intellectual prestige and everything for the football prestige of the college—these and others will oppose him bitterly. Because the power they possess is many-sided, often they will be able to hinder and delay not only this reform but any other reform that the President may attempt to introduce. In fact they may even drive him from office, not directly on account of his opposition to football, but on some other charge of inefficiency or trouble-making. Even with the support of college officials and graduates who share his view, the President can do little to change the fundamental nature of intercollegiate football. The octopus has far too tenacious a hold.

So the average college president lets ill enough alone. He postpones the day of reckoning with the football hierarchy. Next year, perhaps, when his new plan for a salary increase for the professors has gone through and the money has been raised for the new chemical laboratory—but not now. Better do nothing, say nothing which might jeopardize his position. Next year, perhaps, or the year after that. And things being as they are, can you blame him?

### III

I suppose you cannot. Yet I should be more inclined to sympathize with him if he and those about him would do one or two obvious and not impossible things. For one thing, he might cast a thoughtful eye upon the propaganda which emanates from his own institution. I have already given a sample or two of this propaganda, let me give a few more, the sort of stuff that leaves me cold when college presidents explain to

me in detail how football has been spoiled not by the colleges but by the outside public

Harold E. Grange—the middle name is Edward—was born in Forksville, Sullivan County, Pennsylvania, on June 13, 1903. His father, Lyle N. Grange, in his youth had been the king of the lumberjacks in the Pennsylvania mountains, renowned for his skill, strength and daring. His mother, a sweet and lovely girl, died when "Red" was five years old and it was this which determined his father to move to Wheaton, Illinois. The family consisted of the father, Harold, a younger brother Garland, who entered Illinois in 1924, and a daughter who soon married.

This is the opening paragraph of a biographical masterpiece sent to the newspapers by the publicity department of the University of Illinois. Why on earth should stuff of this sort come forth from an educational institution supposedly devoted to the cause of sound learning? That is what some of us would be happy to learn.

So long as the colleges persist in maintaining publicity bureaus and press directors to keep the nation informed of the doings and sayings of their heroes in sport, they can hardly accuse the public of having spoiled football. And the college or university, large or small, that does not do this sort of thing is certainly an exception. Most colleges call the mimeographed matter they broadcast to the press a "Sports Letter", others prefer to entitle it "News of Sports" or "Athletic News Service," while others send out their copy minus any high-sounding name at all. Some of the larger universities supplement their routine propaganda with a pictorial magazine entirely devoted to sports. From two hundred news releases which flooded the sporting department of one New York daily in ten days during one summer, it was possible to learn that at the University of Chicago the men had been engaged in physical work to keep in trim all summer, that "Truck Weaver, the two hundred and thirty pound guard, has been working on a downtown building as a laborer, Rudy Leyers, fullback, has

been working as a hodcarrier, while Harold Bluhm, quarterback, has been pushing a wheelbarrow on the new Jones Chemical Laboratory " One also discovered that Boston University, after waiting fifty-nine years for "decent football facilities," at last has a field of its own, that at West Point the students are marched into football mass meetings much as they are marched to classes and to drill, that at Penn State Hugo Bezdek is "stumped " It appears that the quarters where the players live were used during the past summer by the Institute of French Education, and the French accent and culture have so corrupted the football squad that "orders have gone out to burn all French periodicals and books found in the buildings " Read this announcement from the University of West Virginia and you might imagine yourself reading of the doings of a professional boxing promoter

At the home office at Morgantown there is a big job of assembling ticket application blanks, announcement of games, times to be played, prices of tickets, preference of orders, souvenir cards, etc, etc Director Stansbury also has some new features to present in the way of window-card and automobile-banner advertising which proved very popular with the fans over the state last year Several requests have already reached the office for materials of this nature by agencies who usually handle Mountaineer tickets

Frankness in the broadcasting of sports went far one summer when Purdue University, not content with the usual methods of sporting propaganda, sent broadcast a large poster with the word FOOTBALL written across the top Directly underneath are shown three members of the university team in action, and lest the observer mistake their identity, the names of the three stars are boldly printed in block lettering On the side is the university schedule, in lettering smaller than the names of the stars aforesaid. Could the press agent for Mr Ziegfeld do more than that?

These things make one a little skeptical when the college authorities express their belief that the public is responsible

for the football mania. Nor do their declarations about the good done by the money received from football always ring quite true. Every year toward the end of the football season, when reports about the vast sums taken in by our colleges flood the press, a rush of printed matter fills the sports pages of the newspapers with arguments to prove how wisely and how well these millions are used. Attempt to question the sacredness of football and any athletic director will immediately overwhelm you with a flood of unanswerable statistics. He will show that football is the godfather of games within and without the walls of the university, and that with its gate-receipts are built swimming pools and squash courts, that from its profits spring crews fully armed, and golf and tennis teams fully clothed. A new baseball cage was built out of football earnings. The lacrosse team made a southern trip upon them. They helped finance the rifle and chess teams, the polo and the debating teams. They maintained and paid for all intramural sports: sports between classes, between the clubs and societies, sports between the dormitories. In fact, they did almost everything but pay the salary of the President. The word intramural to an athletic director takes on a holy significance when he is talking, the intramural sports idea, "athletics for all," is hammered home for all it is worth to show how beneficial modern football really is.

Lately, however, I have wondered whether football does quite so much to promote athletics for all as its supporters so loudly claim. Perhaps this is a misleading impression. Yet at any rate it is shared by Professor Thomas E. French of Ohio State University, for in his report to the National Collegiate Association in 1924 he says:

"Compared to the amounts spent on intercollegiate sports, the budgets for intramural sport are comparatively small. Ohio is spending this year \$13,000, Minnesota \$11,000, Michigan \$10,000, and others from \$7,500 to \$3,000."

But in the very year in which Professor French was speaking, football receipts at Ohio State University were \$275,723.75.

Of this sum \$127,017 83 was expended upon a million-six-hundred-thousand-dollar stadium, and \$13,000 upon intramural athletics!

Thirteen thousand out of \$275,000 Professor French can hardly be charged with exaggeration when he says that the sum spent on intramural athletics at Ohio State is comparatively small

Is this exceptional? Not in the least Stanford University, to take a college upon the West Coast, took in during the same year \$194,000 in athletic receipts, and after paying for a football stadium, a basketball stadium, team expenses and equipment, spent the generous sum of \$7,500 on intramural sport Harvard University in the same year received over a million dollars from football Of that sum nearly \$300,000—or more than one-quarter—was spent upon various intercollegiate teams, traveling expenses, coaches, rubbers, trainers, doctors, uniforms, and supplies When a college spends \$74,000 for coaches, \$5,000 for rubbers, and \$6,000 for medical services in one short season of two months, it might appear that intramural athletics would be likely to receive less than their share from the remainder

The fact is that the attitude of the universities of this country toward football is often hypocritical in the extreme Certainly their press releases and their statistics of expenditures for football do not square with their protestations that they wish to put an end to the evils which have crept into the game If they really desire to keep the interest of the students and the public upon the main tent, they might as well start the good work of reform right in their own side-shows

#### IV

If they should attempt to do so they might find themselves in receipt of aid and comfort from an unexpected quarter—the undergraduate body

The religion of football is firmly enough established in the

United States to be able to smile at the pin pricks it receives in the nature of Carnegie Foundation reports and other adverse criticism, but it is a fact that from time immemorial even greater religions have flourished and waned as the soul of man in search of new food to satisfy his spiritual hunger turned aside from the well-established creeds of the moment. Today, strong and powerful as is the Great God Football, signs are not wanting to show that American college undergraduates are beginning to doubt its divinity.

For one thing, the enormous size of our larger universities tends to weaken the overwhelming interest in athletics and in football especially. Any college graduate of thirty years ago will tell you of class rushes, class suppers, class proms, and the like, such as have no counterpart today. He will talk of football games and of baseball games and track meets held between college classes, all of which seem strange and impossible to the modern undergraduate. Intense class feeling began to die out years ago, the classes today are far too large in the great universities to permit of much class feeling or class loyalty being shown. So also, the feeling so wrongly called "college spirit" is losing ground in many of the large educational institutions throughout the country.

"Here at Michigan," a man told me recently, "the students feel lost in the great mass of outsiders who come to see the games. They are beginning to feel that the team is not much more theirs than a professional football team."

The report of the Faculty-Student Committee on the Distribution of Students' Time, published in 1925, states that at the University of Chicago seventeen per cent of the men and twenty-eight per cent of the women attended no football games during a recent season. Possibly the fact that the university is situated in a city which offers rival distractions is partly responsible for these figures, but if so many students had been absent from a football game twenty years ago the situation would have called for a football revival meeting.

Today in many large colleges and universities, especially



throughout the East, nobody cares and nobody knows whether or not you attend the big games As President Hopkins of Dartmouth said to me recently

"When I was in college a man would have been considered white-livered and altogether objectionable as a citizen of the community who was not present at every football game Now except for some great dramatic spectacle during the season, undergraduates will be found upon the golf links, the trout streams, and the Outing Club trails, and in canoes on the river on the fall afternoons of the most important games "

A year or two ago the best end on the Harvard football team—a man who had scored the only touchdown against Yale for a long period of years—refused to go out for football because he preferred to row There was no compulsion brought to bear upon him, and he was allowed to do as he pleased The same season one of the outstanding candidates for the Dartmouth team did not try for a place on the eleven because he had set his heart on making Phi Beta Kappa His wishes were also respected Are these isolated, scattered instances? On the contrary, they can be duplicated in most of the large colleges of the country, certainly in most of the Eastern ones A year or so ago at one of these institutions which had been having an especially disastrous football season, several of the players were joking and fooling in the locker room after a sloppy practice session That evening at the training table a graduate—who had returned for a few days to assist in coaching—reproached them violently for their attitude, and attributed the failure of the team to this spirit of carelessness Curiously enough, the entire squad was resentful of his criticism One of the men said that he was sick of football because of the seriousness of men like this alumnus "We've been told about the courage and the carefree attitude of men going into battle in the Great War, but this Yale game is so important we can't even smile a week beforehand "

When the American undergraduate is talking like this one feels the Great God Football tremble Surely there is a chance

for a healthier outlook on sport in the United States when the young men in the colleges are beginning to feel and to think so sensibly about their games. For it is the undergraduates and not the alumni who are most likely to lead the way to a change. As George Owen, the Harvard football star, said a few years ago in a magazine article, "The attitude of the alumni is the most discouraging thing of all. As long as the team is winning they are peaceful and contented. However, let the team lose a few games and the graduates are up in arms, the coach is rotten and it becomes the fundamental duty of everyone to try to find a new coach who has been turning out successful teams. No consideration is taken of the character of the coach. He may have the finest influence in shaping the character of his pupils, he may have given them a finer sense of sportsmanship, a finer appreciation of the value of team play, and a better understanding of the relating of athletics to the whole educational scheme of the college, but if the team doesn't win he is a failure."

No, the graduate still sees football with the eyes of 1908, while the undergraduate is beginning to see it with the eyes of 1928. Last year the Harvard *Crimson*, the student newspaper at Cambridge, decided not to overemphasize athletics, decided to give them the space they deserved and nothing more. For this attitude it was roundly attacked by a famous graduate, a former All-American end. Yet the editors stuck to their policy. At about the same time the Yale *Daily News* came out with a series of intelligent proposals regarding football, the principal one being that the game should be put on much the same basis as in England, with student coaches as well as players. The important thing about these expressions of undergraduate opinion is not that they may lead to any immediate results, but that the undergraduates dare to make them. Twenty years ago these sentiments would have been considered heretical. In another twenty years they may be considered old-fashioned.

Now it is impossible for anyone to study the colleges of

this country, the Eastern universities particularly, without being conscious of the fact that the undergraduate attitude on sports is changing. This does not mean that football will die out and waste away, that football coaches had better cast about for other jobs, that our stadia will crumble and decay, that Athletic Directors will have to return again to the rôle of humble citizens each fall instead of potentates of sport. It does not even mean that the college president who proposed any major reforms in the game would not still be playing with dynamite. It means simply that a saner attitude is gaining ground among the American undergraduates, and that some day football may cease to be a religion to them and become merely a sport. For football as a game, unless all signs to the contrary fail, will never die out.

And after all, why should it? With all its faults and the faults that creep in with it, football today is a superb spectacle. Considering it simply as a game to watch, what other game can compare with it? Where is its movement, its color, its variety equalled in the range of modern sport? Is it not incomparably better than the national sport of any country of Europe? Those who have seen a Cup Tie at Wembley with its hundred and twenty thousand spectators will confess to you that beside a Yale-Princeton game at New Haven it is a dull affair indeed. Pelota? Bull fighting? No, they are second-rate sports, for the spectator at least, beside intercollegiate football. For where is the game to thrill and move the observer as can our modern football, where is the game to bring your heart up suddenly as the back catches a punt in an open field, sidesteps a charging end, swings past another, straight-arms a third, and sets out at last a free man while the stands rise with a spontaneous roar and the goal posts loom directly ahead? Where is the game to bring forth the art of war with none of its destruction, to combine strength and skill, strategy and science? Football in its place, football as a game, has no rivals, with all its faults it is much too fine a sport and much too splendid an entertainment to lose.

Why on earth should we lose it? Why not stop this business of elevating football into a religion, why not do away with the hokum about the moral good it does to the participants and about the idiotic college spirit manifested in cutting classes to cheer the departing team? Why not give up the cant and the buncombe with which football is filled, stop talking about the noble purposes it fulfills, and take it for what it is? A game and nothing more. A game which ought not to interfere in any way with the educational program of the undergraduate, which ought not to be considered the be-all and end-all of college life, in which it matters not at all who wins or who loses, but a magnificent game none the less.

No, not *a* game, *the* game of the twentieth century, the game that beside being a sport to play is also one of the most regal spectacles of the present day.

In short, why not take football for what it is. The Great American Game? And let it go at that.

## Does Business Want Scholars?<sup>1</sup>

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WALTER S. GIFFORD

Walter S. Gifford (1885- ) is President of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. He received an A. B. degree from Harvard in 1905, and is an excellent example of the college graduate who has been eminently successful in business.

THE other day a gentleman said to a New York friend of his who is a lawyer, "My son is going to graduate from the law school this year and is looking around for a place. Could I send him in to see you?"

The lawyer replied, "Certainly, I'd be glad to see him," but there was no great enthusiasm in his tone.

The father continued, "He is on the *Law Review*, and several offices have spoken to him, but if you will tell me who in your office sees . . ." He got no farther. "You send him right in to see me," answered the lawyer. "I'd like to talk to him."

The change had come over the lawyer when the father said, "He is on the *Law Review*." That means he is a high-mark man.

The big law firms seek the high-mark men from the law schools. The profession believes that the man who stands well in his law studies will make a better lawyer than one who does not.

The hospitals take the same attitude toward medical students. A man with low marks in the medical school is not likely to get an appointment in the best hospitals, for it is the experience of the medical profession that those who stand well in

<sup>1</sup> From *Harper's Magazine*. Reprinted by permission of the author.

the professional school are more likely to stand well in their profession later on

But business, on the other hand, does not as a rule select men on the basis of their marks in college. Perhaps for this reason the undergraduate who intends to go into business does not always consider his scholastic standing in relation to his business career. He is somewhat apt to think of his college course as an era in itself, without influence on his life after graduation. If he does connect his college course with a business future at all, he is likely to think that his athletic or social activities, his work on college papers or in dramatic clubs, or similar extra-curricular efforts, are better training for the future than his academic work. Some do the academic work merely in order that they may stay in college to do the other things. And in taking this attitude the boys reflect fairly accurately the opinion of many of their elders, under whom they are going to begin their working career.

I believe that this attitude of business toward the scholarship of college graduates differs from the attitude of the legal and medical professions toward scholarship in the graduate schools for one main reason. Business believes that a law school teaches a boy law but that a college does not teach a boy business. Consequently, a boy who stands high in the law school will possess knowledge more immediately useful than one who doesn't, while no matter how high a boy stands in college he will not have much, if any, knowledge immediately useful in business.

This, of course, flies counter to the theory of the educators. They maintain that the courses in college are so conducted that a boy who gets high marks will have had to use his brains and that the habit and ability to use his brains will make him valuable and successful in whatever he tries to do. The legal and medical professions rather sustain this contention, for they say that it is not so much what the men of high standing know that makes them valuable when they leave the professional schools, but the fact that they have the habit of successful

mental accomplishment The academic folk believe that, while a knowledge of history or philosophy may not be immediately applicable to the shoe business, a boy who did good work in history and philosophy is more likely to do well in the shoe business than one who did poorly in those subjects

The educators believe that the process of education is a continuous interrelated process beginning early in school and ending late in life They have figures to prove that the boys who do well in school generally do well in college, and that those who do well in college generally rank high in the professional schools, and that those who rank high in the professional schools generally succeed in the professions—law, medicine, and teaching In fact, a high-grade man in school has much the best chance of being a high-grade man in college, in professional school, in practice, and all through life

A very high percentage of the membership of the Phi Beta Kappa Society are mentioned in *Who's Who* This does not necessarily bear directly upon the relationship between scholarship and business, because *Who's Who* is not intended as a guide to business distinction, but it does indicate that the high-mark men who chose the activities favored by *Who's Who* gained more distinction in those activities than the low-mark men

Phi Beta Kappa claims 40 per cent of the Justices of the Supreme Court between 1800 and 1922, and 40 per cent of the Secretaries of State Considering the small numbers of the Society, that is an amazing showing

In 1911, President A Lawrence Lowell of Harvard published an article on "College Studies and Professional Training" which showed that men who ranked high in their college studies were apt to rank high in the law and medical schools and that, in spite of exceptions, those who ranked lower in college ranked on the average lower in the professional schools This deduction might reasonably make business wonder whether in preparing for business it makes much difference what subjects are mainly pursued in college—if these subjects

whatever they are, are pursued with sufficient success. A study of the statistics he presented must make any business man at least wonder whether, if high-rank men are so certain to do better in the professional schools and in the professions, it might not be that they are more likely to do better than the average in business.

In 1917 Dr William Trufant Foster, then President of Reed College, published a book under the arresting title *Should Students Study?* In the chapter "Success in Studies and in Life" he presents material concerning graduates of West Point, of the Yale School of Forestry, of an engineering school, and of several colleges. In the case of each institution the high-scholarship men were mainly those who attained later eminence. Dr Foster concludes, "Indeed it is likely that the first quarter in scholarship of any school or college class will give to the world as many distinguished men as the other three-quarters."

Last year Professor Hugh A. Smith of the University of Wisconsin published the results of a test based on eighteen hundred alumni of a large university. These men had received their bachelors' degrees over a period of 45 years, and all of them were at least 15 years out of college when the study was made. As it progressed, the committee compiling the information became more and more convinced of an almost invariable consistency between scholarship and success in life. To quote Professor Smith:

A few representative figures will show the reason for these convictions. For the first two classes of 54 graduates, a number of persons were asked opinions concerning the career and success of the members, and 8 of these alumni were quite generally agreed on, and one other was suggested by at least two correspondents, as the most worthy. The college marks showed that the eight universally approved had the highest averages in the two classes, 6 being over 91 and 2 being 89. The other one, who won partial approval, had a



mark of 85, which was no higher than that of 4 or 5 not suggested as eminent

From a later class of 75 members, a final list was submitted to a number of people, 11 won general approval as to their eminence in life, and 5 others received 2 or more votes Ten of the 11 were the first 10 in the class in grades, all averaging above 90

These data indicate that in many fields college scholarship is a significant index of later success But even they include relatively few cases of men in business

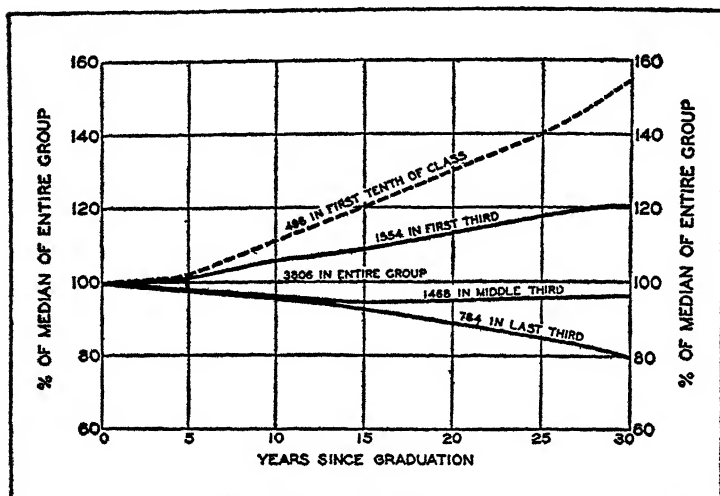
## II

Clearly, to tell whether high scholarship has a direct relationship to success in business, more comprehensive and more rigorous evidence is needed Business itself can most easily collect that evidence Furthermore, it can hardly afford not to do so Each year at least half of the 40,000 young men graduating from our colleges are entering its ranks Their selection and training require an extremely large investment One of the most readily available objective measures of their past achievement is their college scholastic record It measures the results in what, after all, has been their major task for four years Its value for indicating future achievement is surely worth determining

With this point of view, the personnel department of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, under the direction of Mr E K Hall, for the past two years has been making such a study of the relation of college scholarship to success in the Bell System A large part of the study, covering the record of 4,125 of the college graduates in the Bell System from 104 colleges is completed Additional records from a number of other colleges are expected, but there is no reason to believe that these additional cases will alter materially the general results already obtained

When this study of the relation of college scholarship to

progress in the business has been completed it is proposed, if the necessary data are obtainable, to make a somewhat similar study of the relation between school record and progress in the business. A great many of the higher positions in the System are held by men who did not go to college, and the real picture of the relationship between scholarship and subsequent



I—MEDIAN SALARIES BY COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP RANK

The median salary of the entire group studied is shown by the horizontal 100% line. Thirty years after graduation, the median salary of the men in the first tenth of their college classes is 155%, that of the men in the lowest third of their classes is 79% of this median.

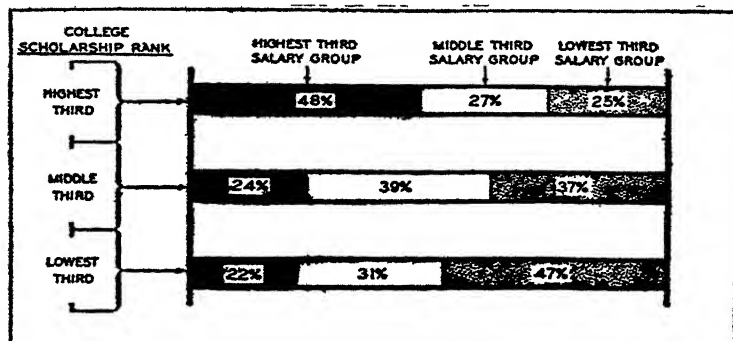
progress cannot be completed without some data as to the scholarship records of the men who did not have a college education. The scholastic records of the college men were studied first.

Of the 4,125 graduates, 319 were at once eliminated from the study because more than half of their business careers had been outside the Bell System. Of the 3,806 included, 1,662 were less than five years out of college, 2,144 were from five to thirty

years out In obtaining these men's records we asked the colleges to classify them in four groups

- 1—Those graduating in the first tenth of their class,
- 2—Those graduating in the first third but not the first tenth,
- 3—Those graduating in the middle third of their class,
- 4—Those graduating in the lower third of their class

Chart I shows the median salaries of these men grouped in accordance with their scholarship rank at college Each group's median is expressed as a percentage of the median of all the



II—DISTRIBUTION OF COLLEGE GRADUATES INTO SALARY GROUPS

In general, men in the first third of their college classes are most likely to be found in the highest third of their group in salary, those in the middle third in scholarship to be in the middle third in salary, and those in the lowest third in scholarship to be in the lowest third in salary The above chart is based on the record of 2,144 Bell System employees over five years out of college

men included in the study Median salaries, which show the salary of the man in the middle of his group, for example the fiftieth man in a group of ninety-nine, have been used instead of average salaries, which are sometimes greatly affected by one or two especially high salaries.

As is indicated on Chart II, of the 3,806 men studied, 498 had graduated in the first tenth of their respective classes By about the fifth year of their employment this group began to

earn more than the other college men. They continued to increase their advantage little by little until they were twenty-five years out of college. Then they began to go ahead still more rapidly. The line in the chart represents, of course, the median man in the group. Many individuals did better and many poorer than this man, but the group as a whole averaged substantially higher earnings than the rest of the 3,800.

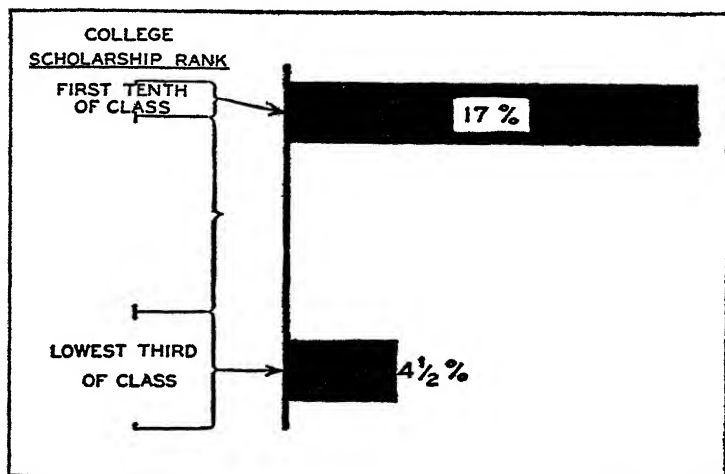
Next to the men who graduated in the first tenth of their classes come those who were in the first third of their classes, including the first tenth, 1,554 men. Their average earnings in the Bell System are also in relation to their scholarship in college. They are lower than the earnings of the men in the first tenth of their classes, but better than any other group.

Of the 3,806 men studied, 1,468 graduated in the middle third of their classes and the median man's earnings in this group by the time they are thirty years out of college is somewhat less than two-thirds that of the median man among those in the first tenth of their classes.

The 784 men who graduated in the lowest third of their classes have earned the least, and the curve of the earnings of the median man in this group has exactly the opposite trend to that of the median man in the upper tenth of their classes: the longer the best students are in business, the more rapidly their earnings rise. The longer the poorer students are in business, the slower their earnings rise.

It cannot be stated too emphatically that these lines on the charts represent the averages of the performances of the men in the different groups and that the records of individuals in each group vary very widely from the averages. It is clear, however, that in the Bell System, on the average, men who were good students have done better than those who were not. There are, of course, exceptions—men who were poor students who are succeeding well and men who were good students succeeding less well—but on the whole the evidence is very striking that there is a direct relation between high marks in college and salaries afterward in the Bell System.

In general the normal expectation is that any college graduate entering business has one chance in three of standing in salary among the highest third of all the college graduates in his company. From this study, as illustrated by the chart, it appears that the man in the first third in scholarship at college, five years or more after graduation, has not merely one chance



III—PERCENTAGE OF SCHOLARSHIP GROUPS NOW IN HIGHEST TENTH SALARY GROUP

Men from the first tenth of their college classes have four times the chance of those from the lowest third to stand in the highest tenth salary group

in three, but about one in two of standing in the first third in salary. On the other hand, the man in the lowest third in scholarship has, instead of one chance in three, only about one in five of standing in the highest third in salary. There is also nearly one chance in two that he will stand in the lowest third in salary.

In the same way, as shown by Chart III, the man in the highest tenth in scholarship in college has not one chance in ten, but nearly two chances in ten of standing in the highest

tenth in salary The man in the lowest third in salary, on the other hand, has instead of one chance in ten, only one in twenty-two of standing in the first tenth in salary

Strikingly enough, almost exactly the same results as those just given were obtained separately for the engineering graduates and the graduates in arts and business who together make up the whole group studied

This analysis may not answer Doctor Foster's academic question, "Should Students Study?" but it has some bearing upon whether industry should seek students who had studied I hope it has bearing enough on the subject to lead other companies, associations, trades, and industries to make studies along similar lines It would undoubtedly be helpful if such studies could cover men who did not go to college as well as college graduates

In this particular study made by the Bell System salary has been used as a measure of success While I do not believe that success in life can be rated by income, I do believe that as between one man and another working in the same business organization, success and salary—while not the same thing—will, generally speaking, parallel each other

In studying the relationship between success in scholarship and in business it is necessary, therefore, to study the results of good and poor scholars in the same line of work, or perhaps even within one company, for general comparisons of men under different conditions in different businesses will not produce very valuable results For instance, if scholarship were an exact measure of business ability, it would not mean that a fine scholar who had entered the cotton mill business recently would have made as much money as if he had been in the automobile business He might have been as great a success, however He might achieve what he set out to do equally well At certain times some businesses make more money than others and, as Mr Julius Rosenwald has said, luck has a great deal to do with the making of money.

By organization, by the power to use nature which science

has provided, industry has shortened the hours and eased the burden of making a living. Men work eight hours where they used to work twelve and fourteen. Vacations are longer and more frequent. Success in life, both for the individual and for the nation, depends on the use of this leisure time just as it does on the use of the business time. Perhaps a mind trained to scholarship in youth may more easily find success and happiness in that leisure than one untrained.

If studies by others corroborate the results of this study in the Bell System and it becomes clear that the mind well trained in youth has the best chance to succeed in any business it may choose, then scholarship as a measure of mental equipment is of importance both to business and to business men. Business will have a surer guide to the selection of able young men than it has used in the past, and the young men who train the muscle of their brains can feel reasonably certain that such training will add to their success in business and, in all probability, to the fruitful and happy use of the leisure which success in business will give them.

## The American Scholar

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RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), poet, philosopher, master of inspiring prose, is well known as one of America's greatest thinkers and writers. Everyone should read a few at least of Emerson's best essays: "Compensation," "Self-Reliance," "The Over-Soul," "Friendship," and "Nature." "The American Scholar" was delivered as an address before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Harvard College in 1837.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN: I greet you on the commencement of our literary year. Our anniversary is one of hope, and, perhaps, not enough of labor. We do not meet for games of strength or skill, for the recitation of histories, tragedies, and odes, like the ancient Greeks, for parliaments of love and poesy, like the Troubadours, nor for the advancement of science, like our contemporaries in the British and European capitals. Thus far our holiday has been simply a friendly sign of the survival of the love of letters amongst a people too busy to give to letters any more. As such, it is precious as the sign of an indestructible instinct. Perhaps the time is already come when it ought to be, and will be, something else, when the sluggish intellect of this continent will look from under its iron lids, and fill the postponed expectation of the world with something better than the exertions of mechanical skill. Our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands, draws to a close. The millions that around us are rushing into life cannot always be fed on the sere remains of foreign harvests. Events, actions arise, that must be sung, that will sing themselves. Who can doubt that poetry will revive and lead in a new age, as the star



in the constellation Harp, which now flames in our zenith, astronomers announce, shall one day be the pole-star for a thousand years?

In this hope I accept the topic which not only usage, but the nature of our association, seem to prescribe to this day,—the AMERICAN SCHOLAR Year by year we come up hither to read one more chapter of his biography Let us inquire what light new days and events have thrown on his character and his hopes

It is one of those fables which, out of an unknown antiquity, convey an unlooked-for wisdom, that the gods, in the beginning, divided Man into men, that he might be more helpful to himself, just as the hand was divided into fingers, the better to answer its end

The old fable covers a doctrine ever new and sublime, that there is One Man,—present to all particular men only partially, or through one faculty, and that you must take the whole society to find the whole man Man is not a farmer, or a professor, or an engineer, but he is all Man is priest, and scholar, and statesman, and producer, and soldier In the *divided* or social state these functions are parcelled out to individuals, each of whom aims to do his stint of the joint work, whilst each other performs his The fable implies that the individual, to possess himself, must sometimes return from his own labor to embrace all the other laborers But, unfortunately, this original unit, this fountain of power, has been so distributed to multitudes, has been so minutely subdivided and peddled out, that it is spilled into drops and cannot be gathered The state of society is one in which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk, and strut about so many walking monsters—a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man

Man is thus metamorphosed into a thing, into many things The planter, who is Man sent out into the field to gather food, is seldom cheered by any idea of the true dignity of his ministry He sees his bushel and his cart, and nothing beyond, and sinks into the farmer, instead of Man on the farm The

tradesman scarcely ever gives an ideal worth to his work, but is ridden by the routine of his craft, and the soul is subject to dollars. The priest becomes a form, the attorney, a statute-book, the mechanic, a machine, the sailor, a rope of a ship.

In this distribution of functions the scholar is the delegated intellect. In the right state, he is *Man Thinking*. In the degenerate state, when the victim of society, he tends to become a mere thinker, or, still worse, the parrot of other men's thinking.

In this view of him, as *Man Thinking*, the theory of his office is contained. Him Nature solicits with all her placid, all her monitory pictures, him the past instructs, him the future invites. Is not, indeed, every man a student, and do not all things exist for the student's behoof? And, finally, is not the true scholar the only true master? But the old oracle said, "All things have two handles: beware of the wrong one." In life, too often the scholar errs with mankind and forfeits his privilege. Let us see him in his school, and consider him in reference to the main influences he receives.

I. The first in time and the first in importance of the influences upon the mind is that of Nature. Every day, the sun, and, after sunset, Night and her stars. Ever the winds blow, ever the grass grows. Every day, men and women, conversing, beholding and beholden. The scholar is he of all men whom this spectacle most engages. He must settle its value in his mind. What is Nature to him? There is never a beginning, there is never an end, to the inexplicable continuity of this web of God, but always circular power returning into itself. Therein it resembles his own spirit, whose beginning, whose ending, he never can find,—so entire, so boundless. Far, too, as her splendors shine, system on system shooting like rays upward, downward, without centre, without circumference,—in the mass and in the particle, Nature hastens to render account of herself to the mind. Classification begins. To the young

mind, everything is individual, stands by itself. By and by it finds how to join two things, and see in them one nature, then three, then three thousand, and so tyrannized over by its own unifying instinct, it goes on tying things together, diminishing anomalies, discovering roots running under ground, whereby contrary and remote things cohere, and flower out from one stem. It presently learns that since the dawn of history there has been a constant accumulation and classifying of facts. But what is classification but the perceiving that these objects are not chaotic, and are not foreign, but have a law which is also a law of the human mind? The astronomer discovers that geometry, a pure abstraction of the human mind, is the measure of planetary motion. The chemist finds proportions and intelligible method throughout matter, and science is nothing but the finding of analogy, identity, in the most remote parts. The ambitious soul sits down before each refractory fact, one after another reduces all strange constitutions, all new powers, to their class and their law, and goes on forever to animate the last fibre of organization, the outskirts of nature, by insight.

Thus to him, to this school-boy under the bending dome of day, is suggested that he and it proceed from one root, one is leaf and one is flower, relation, sympathy, stirring in every vein. And what is that Root? Is not that the soul of his soul? A thought too bold, a dream too wild. Yet when this spiritual light shall have revealed the law of more earthly natures, when he has learned to worship the soul, and to see that the natural philosophy that now is, is only the first gropings of its gigantic hand, he shall look forward to an ever-expanding knowledge as to a becoming creator. He shall see that Nature is the opposite of the soul, answering to it part for part. One is seal and one is print. Its beauty is the beauty of his own mind. Its laws are the laws of his own mind. Nature then becomes to him the measure of his attainments. So much of Nature as he is ignorant of, so much of his own mind does he not yet possess. And, in

fine, the ancient precept, "Know thyself," and the modern precept, "Study Nature," become at last one maxim

II The next great influence into the spirit of the scholar is the mind of the Past—in whatever form, whether of literature, of art, of institutions, that mind is inscribed Books are the best type of the influence of the past, and perhaps we shall get at the truth—learn the amount of this influence more conveniently—by considering their value alone

The theory of books is noble The scholar of the first age received into him the world around, brooded thereon, gave it the new arrangement of his own mind, and uttered it again It came into him life, it went out from him truth It came to him short-lived actions, it went out from him immortal thoughts It came to him business, it went from him poetry It was dead fact, now it is quick thought It can stand and it can go It now endures, it now flies, it now inspires Precisely in proportion to the depth of mind from which it issued, so high does it soar, so long does it sing

Or, I might say, it depends on how far the process had gone of transmuting life into truth In proportion to the completeness of the distillation, so will the purity and imperishableness of the product be But none is quite perfect As no air-pump can by any means make a perfect vacuum, so neither can any artist entirely exclude the conventional, the local, the perishable from his book, or write a book of pure thought that shall be as efficient in all respects to a remote posterity, as to contemporaries, or rather to the second age Each age, it is found, must write its own book, or rather, each generation for the next succeeding The books of an older period will not fit this

Yet hence arises a grave mischief The sacredness which attaches to the act of creation—the act of thought—is transferred to the record The poet chanting was felt to be a divine man henceforth the chant is divine also The writer was a just and wise spirit henceforward it is settled, the book is

perfect, as love of the hero corrupts into worship of his statue Instantly the book becomes noxious, the guide is a tyrant The sluggish and perverted mind of the multitude, slow to open to the incursions of Reason, having once so opened, having once received this book, stands upon it and makes an outcry if it is disparaged Colleges are built on it Books are written on it by thinkers, not by Man Thinking, by men of talent, that is, who start wrong, who set out from accepted dogmas, not from their own sight of principles Meek young men grow up in libraries believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon have given, forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon were only young men in libraries when they wrote these books

Hence, instead of Man Thinking we have the bookworm Hence, the book-learned class who value books as such, not as related to Nature and the human constitution, but as making a sort of Third Estate with the world and the soul Hence, the restorers of readings, the emendators, the bibliomaniacs of all degrees

Books are the best of things, well used, abused, among the worst What is the right use? What is the one end, which all means go to effect? They are for nothing but to inspire I had better never see a book, than to be warped by its attraction clean out of my own orbit, and made a satellite instead of a system The one thing in the world, of value, is the active soul This every man is entitled to, this every man contains within him, although, in almost all men, obstructed, and as yet unborn The soul active sees absolute truth, and utters truth, or creates In this action it is genius, not the privilege of here and there a favorite, but the sound estate of every man. In its essence it is progressive The book, the college, the school of art, the institution of any kind, stop with some past utterance of genius This is good, say they,—let us hold by this They pin me down They look backward and not forward But genius looks forward, the eyes of man are set in his forehead, not in his hindhead; man hopes, genius creates Whatever talents may

be, if the man create not, the pure efflux of the Deity is not his, cinders and smoke there may be, but not yet flame. There are creative manners, there are creative actions, and creative words, manners, actions, words, that is, indicative of no custom or authority, but springing spontaneous from the mind's own sense of good and fair.

On the other part, instead of being its own seer, let it receive from another mind its truth, though it were in torrents of light, without periods of solitude, inquest, and self-recovery, and a fatal disservice is done. Genius is always sufficiently the enemy of genius by over-influence. The literature of every nation bears me witness. The English dramatic poets have Shakspearized now for two hundred years.

Undoubtedly there is a right way of reading, so it be sternly subordinated. Man Thinking must not be subdued by his instruments. Books are for the scholar's idle times. When we can read God directly, the hour is too precious to be wasted in other men's transcripts of their readings. But when the intervals of darkness come, as come they must,—when the sun is hid, and the stars withdraw their shining,—we repair to the lamps which were kindled by their ray, to guide our steps to the East again, where the dawn is. We hear, that we may speak. The Arabian proverb says, "A fig-tree, looking on a fig-tree, becometh fruitful."

It is remarkable, the character of the pleasure we derive from the best books. They impress us with the conviction that one nature wrote and the same reads. We read the verses of one of the great English poets, of Chaucer, of Marvell, of Dryden, with the most modern joy,—with a pleasure, I mean, which is in great part caused by the abstraction of all *time* from their verses. There is some awe mixed with the joy of our surprise when this poet, who lived in some past world two or three hundred years ago, says that which lies close to my own soul, that which I had wellnigh thought and said. But for the evidence thence afforded to the philosophical doctrine of the identity of all minds, we should suppose

some preestablished harmony, some foresight of souls that were to be, and some preparation of stores for their future wants, like the fact observed in insects, who lay up food before death for the young grub they shall never see.

I would not be hurried by any love of system, by any exaggeration of instincts, to underrate the Book. We all know that as the human body can be nourished on any food, though it were boiled grass and the broth of shoes, so the human mind can be fed by any knowledge. And great and heroic men have existed who had almost no other information than by the printed page. I only would say, that it needs a strong head to bear that diet. One must be an inventor to read well. As the proverb says, "He that would bring home the wealth of the Indies, must carry out the wealth of the Indies." There is then creative reading as well as creative writing. When the mind is braced by labor and invention, the page of whatever book we read becomes luminous with manifold allusion. Every sentence is doubly significant, and the sense of our author is as broad as the world. We then see, what is always true, that, as the seer's hour of vision is short and rare among heavy days and months, so is its record, perchance, the least part of his volume. The discerning will read, in his Plato or Shakspeare, only that least part,—only the authentic utterances of the oracle, all the rest he rejects, were it never so many times Plato's and Shakspeare's.

Of course, there is a portion of reading quite indispensable to a wise man. History and exact science he must learn by laborious reading. Colleges, in like manner, have their indispensable office,—to teach elements. But they can only highly serve us when they aim not to drill, but to create, when they gather from far every ray of various genius to their hospitable halls, and, by the concentrated fires, set the hearts of their youth on flame. Thought and knowledge are natures in which apparatus and pretension avail nothing. Gowns, and pecuniary foundations, though of towns of gold, can never countervail the least sentence or syllable of wit. Forget this, and our

American colleges will recede in their public importance, whilst they grow richer every year

III There goes in the world a notion that the scholar should be a recluse, a valetudinarian,—as unfit for any handiwork or public labor, as a pen-knife for an axe The so-called “practical men” sneer at speculative men, as if, because they speculate or *see*, they could do nothing I have heard it said that the clergy—who are always, more universally than any other class, the scholars of their day—are addressed as women, that the rough, spontaneous conversation of men they do not hear, but only a mincing and diluted speech They are often virtually disenfranchised, and, indeed, there are advocates for their celibacy As far as this is true of the studious classes, it is not just and wise Action is with the scholar subordinate, but it is essential Without it, he is not yet man Without it, thought can never ripen into truth Whilst the world hangs before the eye as a cloud of beauty, we cannot even see its beauty Inaction is cowardice, but there can be no scholar without the heroic mind The preamble of thought, the transition through which it passes from the unconscious to the conscious, is action Only so much do I know, as I have lived Instantly we know whose words are loaded with life, and whose not.

The world—this shadow of the soul, or *other me*—lies wide around Its attractions are the keys which unlock my thoughts and make me acquainted with myself I run eagerly into this resounding tumult. I grasp the hands of those next me, and take my place in the ring to suffer and to work, taught by an instinct, that so shall the dumb abyss be vocal with speech I pierce its order, I dissipate its fear, I dispose of it within the circuit of my expanding life So much only of life as I know by experience, so much of the wilderness have I vanquished and planted, or so far have I extended my being, my dominion I do not see how any man can afford, for the sake of his nerves and his nap, to spare any action in which he can partake It



is pearls and rubies to his discourse Drudgery, calamity, exasperation, want, are instructors in eloquence and wisdom The true scholar grudges every opportunity of action passed by, as a loss of power

It is the raw material out of which the intellect moulds her splendid products A strange process too, this, by which experience is converted into thought, as a mulberry leaf is converted into satin The manufacture goes forward at all hours

The actions and events of our childhood and youth are now matters of calmest observation They lie like fair pictures in the air Not so with our recent actions,—with the business which we now have in hand On this we are quite unable to speculate Our affections as yet circulate through it We no more feel or know it, than we feel the feet, or the hand, or the brain of our body The new deed is yet a part of life,—remains for a time immersed in our unconscious life In some contemplative hour it detaches itself from the life like a ripe fruit, to become a thought of the mind Instantly it is raised, transfigured, the corruptible has put on incorruption Henceforth it is an object of beauty, however base its origin and neighborhood Observe, too, the impossibility of antedating this act In its grub state, it cannot fly, it cannot shine, it is a dull grub But suddenly, without observation, the selfsame thing unfurls beautiful wings, and is an angel of wisdom So is there no fact, no event, in our private history which shall not, sooner or later, lose its adhesive, inert form, and astonish us by soaring from our body into the empyrean Cradle and infancy, school and playground, the fear of boys, and dogs, and ferules, the love of little maids and berries, and many another fact that once filled the whole sky, are gone already, friend and relative, profession and party, town and country, nation and world, must also soar and sing.

Of course, he who has put forth his total strength in fit actions has the richest return of wisdom I will not shut myself out of this globe of action, and transplant an oak into a flower-

pot, there to hunger and pine, nor trust the revenue of some single faculty, and exhaust one vein of thought, much like those Savoyards, who, getting their livelihood by carving shepherds, shepherdesses, and smoking Dutchmen for all Europe, went out one day to the mountain to find stock, and discovered that they had whittled up the last of their pine-trees. Authors we have in numbers who have written out their vein, and who, moved by a commendable prudence, sail for Greece or Palestine, follow the trapper into the prairie, or ramble round Algiers, to replenish their merchantable stock.

If it were only for a vocabulary, the scholar would be covetous of action. Life is our dictionary. Years are well spent in country labors, in town, in the insight into trades and manufactures, in frank intercourse with many men and women, in science, in art,—to the one end of mastering in all their facts a language by which to illustrate and embody our perceptions. I learn immediately from any speaker how much he has already lived, through the poverty or the splendor of his speech. Life lies behind us as the quarry from whence we get tiles and cope-stones for the masonry of to-day. This is the way to learn grammar. Colleges and books only copy the language which the field and the work-yard made.

But the final value of action, like that of books, and better than books, is, that it is a resource. That great principle of Undulation in nature, that shows itself in the inspiring and expiring of the breath, in desire and satiety, in the ebb and flow of the sea, in day and night, in heat and cold, and as yet more deeply ingrained in every atom and every fluid, is known to us under the name of Polarity,—these “fits of easy transmission and reflection,” as Newton called them, are the law of Nature because they are the law of spirit.

The mind now thinks, now acts, and each fit reproduces the other. When the artist has exhausted his materials, when the fancy no longer paints, when thoughts are no longer apprehended, and books are a weariness,—he has always the resource *to live*. Character is higher than intellect. Thinking

is the function Living is the functionary The stream retreats to its source A great soul will be strong to live, as well as strong to think Does he lack organ or medium to impart his truths? He can still fall back on this elemental force of living them This is a total act Thinking is a partial act Let the grandeur of justice shine in his affairs Let the beauty of affection cheer his lowly roof Those "far from fame," who dwell and act with him, will feel the force of his constitution in the doings and passages of the day better than it can be measured by any public and designed display Time shall teach him that the scholar loses no hour which the man lives Herein he unfolds the sacred germ of his instinct, screened from influence What is lost in seemliness is gained in strength Not out of those, on whom systems of education have exhausted their culture, comes the helpful giant to destroy the old or to build the new, but out of unhandelled savage nature, out of terrible Druids and berserkirs, come at last Alfred and Shakespeare

I hear, therefore, with joy whatever is beginning to be said of the dignity and necessity of labor to every citizen There is virtue yet in the hoe and the spade, for learned as well as for unlearned hands And labor is everywhere welcome, always we are invited to work, only be this limitation observed, that a man shall not for the sake of wider activity sacrifice any opinion to the popular judgments and modes of action

I have now spoken of the education of the scholar by Nature, by books, and by action It remains to say somewhat of his duties

They are such as become Man Thinking They may all be comprised in self-trust The office of the scholar is to cheer, to raise, and to guide men by showing them facts amidst appearances He plies the slow, unhonored, and unpaid task of observation. Flamsteed and Herschel, in their glazed observatories, may catalogue the stars with the praise of all men, and, the results being splendid and useful, honor is sure. But he,

in his private observatory, cataloguing obscure and nebulous stars of the human mind, which as yet no man has thought of as such,—watching days and months, sometimes, for a few facts, correcting still his old records,—must relinquish display and immediate fame. In the long period of his preparation he must betray often an ignorance and shiftlessness in popular arts, incurring the disdain of the able, who shoulder him aside. Long he must stammer in his speech, often forego the living for the dead. Worse yet, he must accept—how often!—poverty and solitude. For the ease and pleasure of treading the old road, accepting the fashions, the education, the religion of society, he takes the cross of making his own, and, of course, the self-accusation, the faint heart, the frequent uncertainty and loss of time, which are the nettles and tangling vines in the way of the self-relying and self-directed, and the state of virtual hostility in which he seems to stand to society, and especially to educated society. For all this loss and scorn, what off-set? He is to find consolation in exercising the highest functions of human nature. He is one who raises himself from private considerations, and breathes and lives on public and illustrious thoughts. He is the world's eye. He is the world's heart. He is to resist the vulgar prosperity that retrogrades ever to barbarism, by preserving and communicating heroic sentiments, noble biographies, melodious verse, and the conclusions of history. Whatsoever oracles the human heart, in all emergencies, in all solemn hours, has uttered as its commentary on the world of actions,—these he shall receive and impart. And whatsoever new verdict Reason from her inviolable seat pronounces on the passing man and events of to-day,—this he shall hear and promulgate.

These being his functions, it becomes him to feel all confidence in himself, and to defer never to the popular cry. He and he only knows the world. The world of any moment is the merest appearance. Some great decorum, some fetish of a government, some ephemeral trade, or war, or man, is cried up by half mankind and cried down by the other half, as if

all depended on this particular up or down. The odds are that the whole question is not worth the poorest thought which the scholar has lost in listening to the controversy. Let him not quit his belief that a popgun is a popgun, though the ancient and honorable of the earth affirm it to be the crack of doom. In silence, in steadiness, in severe abstraction, let him hold by himself, add observation to observation, patient of neglect, patient of reproach, and bide his own time,—happy enough if he can satisfy himself alone, that this day he has seen something truly. Success treads on every right step. For the instinct is sure that prompts him to tell his brother what he thinks. He then learns that in going down into the secrets of his own mind he has descended into the secrets of all minds. He learns that he who has mastered any law in his private thoughts is master to that extent of all men whose language he speaks, and of all into whose language his own can be translated. The poet, in utter solitude remembering his spontaneous thoughts and recording them, is found to have recorded that which men in crowded cities find true for them also. The orator distrusts at first the fitness of his frank confessions,—his want of knowledge of the persons he addresses,—until he finds that he is the complement of his hearers, that they drink his words because he fulfils for them their own nature, the deeper he dives into his privatest, secretest presentiment, to his wonder he finds this is the most acceptable, most public, and universally true. The people delight in it, the better part of every man feels, This is my music, this is myself.

In self-trust all the virtues are comprehended. Free should the scholar be,—free and brave. Free even to the definition of freedom, “without any hindrance that does not arise out of his own constitution.” Brave, for fear is a thing which a scholar by his very function puts behind him. Fear always springs from ignorance. It is a shame to him if his tranquillity, amid dangerous times, arise from the presumption that, like children and women, his is a protected class, or if he seek a temporary

peace by the diversion of his thoughts from politics or vexed questions, hiding his head like an ostrich in the flowering bushes, peeping into microscopes, and turning rhymes, as a boy whistles to keep his courage up So is the danger a danger still, so is the fear worse Manlike let him turn and face it Let him look into its eye and search its nature, inspect its origin,—see the whelping of this lion, which lies no great way back, he will then find in himself a perfect comprehension of its nature and extent, he will have made his hands meet on the other side, and can henceforth defy it, and pass on superior The world is his, who can see through its pretension What deafness, what stone-blind custom, what overgrown error you behold, is there only by sufferance,—by your sufferance See it to be a lie, and you have already dealt it its mortal blow

Yes, we are the cowed—we the trustless It is a mischievous notion that we are come late into Nature, that the world was finished a long time ago As the world was plastic and fluid in the hands of God, so it is ever to so much of his attributes as we bring to it. To ignorance and sin, it is flint They adapt themselves to it as they may, but in proportion as a man has anything in him divine, the firmament flows before him and takes his signet and form Not he is great who can alter matter, but he who can alter my state of mind They are the kings of the world who give the color of their present thought to all nature and all art, and persuade men by the cheerful serenity of their carrying the matter, that this thing which they do is the apple which the ages have desired to pluck, now at last ripe, and inviting nations to the harvest. The great man makes the great thing Wherever Macdonald sits, there is the head of the table Linnæus makes botany the most alluring of studies, and wins it from the farmer and the herb-woman, Davy, chemistry, and Cuvier, fossils The day is always his, who works in it with serenity and great aims. The unstable estimates of men crowd to him whose mind is filled with a truth, as the heaped waves of the Atlantic follow the moon.

For this self-trust, the reason is deeper than can be fathomed,

darker than can be enlightened I might not carry with me the feeling of my audience in stating my own belief But I have already shown the ground of my hope, in adverting to the doctrine that man is one I believe man has been wronged, he has wronged himself He has almost lost the light that can lead him back to his prerogatives Men are become of no account Men in history, men in the world of to-day are bugs, are spawn, and are called "the mass" and "the herd" In a century, in a millennium, one or two men, that is to say, one or two approximations to the right state of every man All the rest behold in the hero or the poet their own green and crude being,—ripened, yes, and are content to be less, so *that* may attain to its full stature What a testimony, full of grandeur, full of pity, is borne to the demands of his own nature by the poor clansman, the poor partisan, who rejoices in the glory of his chief The poor and the low find some amends to their immense moral capacity for their acquiescence in a political and social inferiority They are content to be brushed like flies from the path of a great person, so that justice shall be done by him to that common nature which it is the dearest desire of all to see enlarged and glorified They sun themselves in the great man's light, and feel it to be their own element They cast the dignity of man from their downtrodden selves upon the shoulders of a hero, and will perish to add one drop of blood to make that great heart beat, those giant sinews combat and conquer He lives for us, and we live in him

Men such as they are, very naturally seek money or power, and power because it is as good as money,—the "spoils," so called, "of office" And why not? for they aspire to the highest, and this, in their sleep-walking, they dream is highest. Wake them, and they shall quit the false good, and leap to the true, and leave governments to clerks and desks This revolution is to be wrought by the gradual domestication of the idea of Culture The main enterprise of the world for splendor, for extent, is the upbuilding of a man Here are the materials

strewn along the ground The private life of one man shall be a more illustrious monarchy,—more formidable to its enemy, more sweet and serene in its influence to its friend, than any kingdom in history For a man, rightly viewed, comprehendeth the particular natures of all men Each philosopher, each bard, each actor, has only done for me, as by a delegate, what one day I can do for myself The books which once we valued more than the apple of the eye we have quite exhausted What is that but saying that we have come up with the point of view which the universal mind took through the eyes of one scribe, we have been that man, and have passed on First one, then another, we drain all cisterns, and, waxing greater by all these supplies, we crave a better and more abundant food The man has never lived that can feed us ever The human mind cannot be enshrined in a person who shall set a barrier on any one side to this unbounded, unboundable empire It is one central fire, which, flaming now out of the lips of Etna, lightens the capes of Sicily, and now out of the throat of Vesuvius, illuminates the towers and vineyards of Naples It is one light which beams out of a thousand stars It is one soul which animates all men

But I have dwelt perhaps tediously upon this abstraction of the Scholar I ought not to delay longer to add what I have to say of nearer reference to the time and to this country

Historically there is thought to be a difference in the ideas which predominate over successive epochs, and there are data for marking the genius of the Classic, of the Romantic, and now of the Reflective or Philosophical age With the views I have intimated of the oneness or the identity of the mind through all individuals, I do not much dwell on these differences In fact, I believe each individual passes through all three The boy is a Greek, the youth, romantic, the adult, reflective I deny not, however, that a revolution in the leading idea may be distinctly enough traced

Our age is bewailed as the age of Introversion. Must that



needs be evil? We, it seems, are critical, we are embarrassed with second thoughts, we cannot enjoy anything for hankering to know whereof the pleasure consists, we are lined with eyes, we see with our feet, the time is infected with Hamlet's unhappiness,—

Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought

Is it so bad then? Sight is the last thing to be pitied. Would we be blind? Do we fear lest we should outsee Nature and God, and drink truth dry? I look upon the discontent of the literary class as a mere announcement of the fact that they find themselves not in the state of mind of their fathers, and regret the coming state as untried, as a boy dreads the water before he has learned that he can swim. If there is any period one would desire to be born in, is it not the age of Revolution, when the old and the new stand side by side, and admit of being compared, when the energies of all men are searched by fear and by hope, when the historic glories of the old can be compensated by the rich possibilities of the new era? This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.

I read with joy some of the auspicious signs of the coming days, as they glimmer already through poetry and art, through philosophy and science, through church and state.

One of these signs is the fact that the same movement which affected the elevation of what was called the lowest class in the state, assumed in literature a very marked and as benign an aspect. Instead of the sublime and beautiful, the near, the low, the common, was explored and poetized. That which had been negligently trodden under foot by those who were harnessing and provisioning themselves for long journeys into far countries, is suddenly found to be richer than all foreign parts. The literature of the poor, the feelings of the child, the philosophy of the street, the meaning of household life, are the topics of the time. It is a great stride. It is a sign, is it not? of new vigor, when the extremities are made active, when cur-

rents of warm life run into the hands and feet I ask not for the great, the remote, the romantic, what is doing in Italy or Arabia, what is Greek art or Provençal minstrelsy, I embrace the common, I explore and sit at the feet of the familiar, the low Give me insight into to-day, and you may have the antique and future worlds What would we really know the meaning of? The meal in the firkin, the milk in the pan, the ballad in the street, the news of the boat, the glance of the eye, the form and the gait of the body,—show me the ultimate reason of these matters, show me the sublime presence of the highest spiritual cause lurking, as it always does lurk, in these suburbs and extremities of nature, let me see every trifle bristling with the polarity that ranges it instantly on the eternal law, and the shop, the plough, and the ledger, referred to the like cause by which light undulates and poets sing,—and the world lies no longer a dull miscellany and lumber-room, but has form and order, there is no trifle, there is no puzzle, but one design unites and animates the farthest pinnacle and the lowest trench

This idea has inspired the genius of Goldsmith, Burns, Cowper, and, in a newer time, of Goethe, Wordsworth, and Carlyle. This idea they have differently followed and with various success In contrast with their writing, the style of Pope, of Johnson, of Gibbon, looks cold and pedantic This writing is blood-warm Man is surprised to find that things near are not less beautiful and wondrous than things remote The near explains the far The drop is a small ocean A man is related to all nature This perception of the worth of the vulgar is fruitful in discoveries Goethe, in this very thing the most modern of the moderns, has shown us, as none ever did, the genius of the ancients.

There is one man of genius who has done much for this philosophy of life, whose literary value has never yet been rightly estimated, I mean Emanuel Swedenborg The most imaginative of men, yet writing with the precision of a mathematician, he endeavored to engraft a purely philosophical

Ethics on the popular Christianity of his time. Such an attempt, of course, must have difficulty which no genius could surmount. But he saw and showed the connection between nature and the affections of the soul. He pierced the emblematic or spiritual character of the visible, audible, tangible world. Especially did his shade-loving muse hover over and interpret the lower parts of nature, he showed the mysterious bond that allies moral evil to the foul material forms, and has given in epical parables a theory of insanity, of beasts, of unclean and fearful things.

Another sign of our times, also marked by an analogous political movement, is the new importance given to the single person. Everything that tends to insulate the individual—to surround him with barriers of natural respect, so that each man shall feel the world is his and man shall treat with man as a sovereign state with a sovereign state—tends to true union as well as greatness. "I learned," said the melancholy Pestalozzi, "that no man in God's wide earth is either willing or able to help any other man." Help must come from the bosom alone. The scholar is that man who must take up into himself all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future. He must be a university of knowledges. If there be one lesson more than another which should pierce his ear, it is, The world is nothing, the man is all, in yourself is the law of all nature, and you know not yet how a globule of sap ascends, in yourself slumbers the whole of Reason, it is for you to know all, it is for you to dare all. Mr. President and Gentlemen, this confidence in the unsearched might of man belongs, by all motives, by all prophecy, by all preparation, to the American Scholar. We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe. The spirit of the American freeman is already suspected to be timid, imitative, tame. Public and private avarice make the air we breathe thick and fat. The scholar is decent, indolent, complaisant. See already the tragic consequence. The mind of this country, taught to aim at low objects, eats upon itself. There is no work for any

but the decorous and the complaisant Young men of the fairest promise, who began life upon our shores, inflated by the mountain winds, shined upon by all the stars of God, find the earth below not in unison with these, but are hindered from action by the disgust which the principles on which business is managed inspire, and turn drudges or die of disgust—some of them suicides What is the remedy? They did not yet see, and thousands of young men as hopeful now crowding to the barriers for the career do not yet see, that if the single man plant himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him Patience, patience, with the shades of all the good and great for company, and for solace, the perspective of your own infinite life, and for work, the study and the communication of principles, the making those instincts prevalent, the conversion of the world Is it not the chief disgrace in the world not to be a unit, not to be reckoned one character, not to yield that peculiar fruit, which each man was created to bear, but to be reckoned in the gross, in the hundred, or the thousand, of the party, the section, to which we belong, and our opinion predicted geographically, as the north, or the south? Not so, brothers and friends,—please God, ours shall not be so We will walk on our own feet, we will work with our own hands, we will speak our own minds The study of letters shall be no longer a name for pity, for doubt, and for sensual indulgence The dread of man and the love of man shall be a wall of defence and a wreath of joy around all A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men

## INFORMAL ESSAYS



## The Author to the Reader

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MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE

Translated by John Florio (1603)

Michel De Montaigne (1533-1592), known as "The Father of the Modern Essay," was born in Périgord, France. He served in the army and at court, but at the age of thirty-eight he retired to his chateau and spent the rest of his life in study and writing, with the exception of a four-year period in which he served as mayor of Bordeaux.

**R**EADER, loe here a well-meaning Booke. It doth at the first entrance forewarne thee, that in contriving the same, I have proposed unto my selfe no other than a familiar and private end. I have no respect or consideration at all, either to thy service, or to my glory, my forces are not capable of any such desseigne. I have vowed the same to the particular commodity of my kinsfolks and friends: to the end, that losing me (which they are likely to doe ere long) they may therein find some lineaments of my conditions and humours, and by that meanes reserve more whole, and more lively foster, the knowledge and acquaintance they have had of me. Had my intention beene to forestall and purchase the worlds opinion and favor, I would surely have adorned my selfe more quaintly, or kept a more grave and solemne march. I desire therein to be delineated in mine owne genuine, simple and ordinarie fashion, without contention, art or study, for it is my selfe I pourtray. My imperfections shall therein be read to the life, and my naturall forme discerned, so farre forth as publike reverence hath permitted me. For if my fortune had beene to have lived among those nations, which yet are said to live under the sweet liberty of Natures first and uncorrupted lawes,

I assure thee, I would most willingly have pourtrayed my selfe fully and naked Thus, gentle Reader, my selfe am the groundworke of my booke It is then no reason thou shouldest employ thy time about so frivolous and vaine a Subject Therefore farewell

From Montaigne, the first of March, 1580

## Of the Use of Apparell

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MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE

Translated by John Florio (1603)

**W**HATSOEVER I ayne at, I must needs force some of customes contradictions, so carefully hath she barred all our entrances I was devising in this chul-cold season whether the fashion of these late discovered nations to go naked, be a custome forced by the hot temperature of the ayre, as we say of the Indians and Moores, or whether it be an original manner of mankind. Men of understanding, forasmuch as whatsoever is contained under heaven (as saith the Holy Writ) is subject to the same lawes, are wont in such like considerations, where naturall lawes are to be distinguished from those invented by man, to have recourse to the generall policie of the world, where nothing that is counterfet can be admitted Now, all things being exactly furnished else-whence with all necessities to maintaine this being, it is not to be imagined that we alone should be produced in a defective and indigent estate, yea, and in such a one as cannot be maintained without forraigne helpe My opinion is, that even as all plants, trees, living creatures, and whatsoever hath life, is naturally seene furnished with sufficient furniture to defend it selfe from the injurie of all wethers



Propterea que ferè res omnes, aut corio sunt,  
Aut setâ, aut conchis, aut callo, aut cortice tectæ<sup>1</sup>

Therefore all things almost we cover'd make,  
With hide, or haire, or shels, or brawne, or barke

Even so were we But as those who by an artificiall light extinguish the brightnesse of the day, we have quenched our proper means by such as we have borrowed And we may easily discern that only custome makes that seeme impossible unto us which is not so For of those nations that have no knowledge of cloaths, some are found situated under the same heaven, and climate or parallel, that we are in, and more cold and sharper than ours Moreover, the tenderest parts of us are ever bare and naked, as our eyes, face, mouth, nose, and eares, and our country swaines (as our forefathers wont) most of them at this day goe barebreasted downe to the navill Had we beene borne needing petti-coats and breeches, there is no doubt but Nature would have armed that which she hath left to the batteries of seasons and furie of wethers with some thicker skin or hide, as shee hath done our fingers ends and soales of our feet Why seemes this hard to beleeved? Betweene my fashion of apparell and that of one of my countrie-clownes, I find much more difference betweene him and me than betweene his fashion and that of a man who is cloathed but with his bare skin. "How many men (especially in Turkie) go ever naked for devotions sake?" a certaine man demanded of one of our loytring rogues whom in the deep of frosty Winter he saw wandering up and downe with nothing but his shirt about him, and yet as blithe and lusty as another that keepes himselfe muffled and wrapt in warme furies up to the eares, how he could have patience to go so "And have not you, good Sir" (answered he) "your face all bare? Imagine I am all face" The Italians report (as far as I remember) of the Duke of Florence his fool, who when his Lord asked him how, being so ill-clad, he could endure the cold, which he

<sup>1</sup> Luc I iv 932

hardly was able to doe himselfe, to whom the foole replied  
 "Master, use but my receipt, and put all the cloaths you have  
 upon you, as I doe all mine, you shall feele no more cold then  
 I doe " King Massinissa, even in his eldest daies, were it never  
 so cold, so frosty, so stormie, or sharpe wether, could never  
 be induced to put something on his head, but went alwaies  
 bareheaded The like is reported of the Emperor Severus  
 In the battles that past betweene the Egyptians and the  
 Persians, Herodotus saith, that both himselfe and divers others  
 tooke speciall notice that of such as lay slaine on the ground  
 the Egyptians sculs were without comparison much harder  
 than the Persians by reason that these go ever with their  
 heads covered with coifs and turbants, and those from their  
 infancie ever shaven and bareheaded And King Agesilaus,  
 even in his decrepit age, was ever wont to weare his cloaths  
 both Winter and Summer alike Suetonius affirmeth that  
 Cæsar did ever march formost before his troupes, and most  
 commonly bare-headed, and on foot, whether the sunne shone  
 or it rained The like is reported of Hanniball,

— tum vertice nudo,  
 Excipere insanos imbres, cœlique ruinam <sup>2</sup>

Bare-headed then he did endure,  
 Heav'ns ruine and mad-raging showre

A Venetian that hath long dwelt amongst them, and who  
 is but lately returned thence, writeth, that in the Kingdome  
 of Pegu, both men and women, having all other parts clad,  
 goe ever bare-footed, yea, and on horse-backe also And Plato  
 for the better health and preservation of the body doth  
 earnestly perswade that no man should ever give the feet and  
 the head other cover than Nature hath allotted them He  
 whom the Polonians chuse for their King, next to ours, who  
 may worthily be esteemed one of the greatest Princes of our  
 age, doth never weare gloves, nor what wether soever it be,

<sup>2</sup> Syl Ital 250

winter or summer, other bonnet abroad than in the warme house As I cannot endure to goe unbuttoned or untrussed, so the husband-men neighboring about me would be and feele themselves as fettered or handbound with going so Varro is of opinion, that when we were appointed to stand bare headed before the gods or in presence of the Magistrates, it was rather done for our health, and to enure and arme us against injuries of the wether, than in respect of reverence And since we are speaking of cold, and are French-men, accustomed so strangely to array our selves in party-coloured sutes (not I, because I seldome weare any other than blacke or white, in imitation of my father), let us adde this one thing more, which Captaine Martyn du Bellay relateth in the voyage of Luxemburg, where he saith to have seene so hard frosts, that their munition-wines were faine to be cut and broken with hatchets and wedges, and shared unto the souldiers by weight, which they carried away in baskets, and Ovid,

Nudâque consistunt formam servantia testæ  
Vina, nec hausta meri sed data frustra bibunt<sup>8</sup>

Bare wines, still keeping forme of caske, stand fast,  
Not gulps, but gobbets of their wine they taste

The frosts are so hard and sharpe in the emboguing of the Meotis fennes, that in the very place where Mithridates Lieutenant had delivered a battel to his enemies, on hard ground and drie-footed, and there defeated them, the next summer he there obtained another sea-battel against them The Romanes suffered a great disadvantage in the fight they had with the Carthaginians neere unto Placentia, for so much as they went to their charge with their blood congealed and limbes benumbed, through extreme cold whereas Hannibal had caused many fires to be made through-out his campe, to warme his souldiers by, and a quantitie of oile to be distributed amongst them, that therewith annointing themselves, they might make their sinewes more supple and nimble, and harden their pores

<sup>8</sup> Ovid Trist I, iii El x 23

against the bitter blasts of cold wind which then blew, and nipping piercing of the ayre The Græcians retreat from Babylon into their countrie is renowned by reason of the many difficulties and encombrances they encountred withall, and were to surmount whereof this was one, that in the mountaines of Armenia, being surprised and encircled with so horrible and great quantitie of snow, that they lost both the knowledge of the countrie and the wayes wherewith they were so straitly beset that they continued a day and a night without eating or drinking, and most of their horses and cattell died of their men a great number also deceased, many with the glittering and whiteness of the snow were stricken blinde, divers through the extremitie were lamed, and their limbes shrunk up, many starke stiffe and frozen with colde, although their senses were yet whole Alexander saw a nation where in winter they burie their fruit-bearing trees under the ground, to defend them from the frost a thing also used amongst some of our neighbours Touching the subject of apparell, the King of Mexico was wont to change and shift his clothes foure times a day, and never wore them againe, employing his leavings and cast-sutes for his continuall liberalities and rewards, as also neither pot nor dish, nor any implement of his kitchen or table were twice brought before him

## Of Studies

(1625)

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FRANCIS BACON

Francis Bacon (1561-1626), "The Father of the English Essay," was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and later studied law, held many public offices solicitor-general, attorney general, privy councillor, lord keeper, and lord chancellor, but, being accused of bribery, retired to his estate. Three editions of his *Essays* were published (1597, 1612, and 1625). His chief works were the *Advancement of Learning*, *Novum Organum*, and the *New Atlantis*.

STUDIES serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring, for ornament, is in discourse, and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one, but the general counsels, and the plots, and marshalling of affairs come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth, to use them too much for ornament is affectation, to make judgment wholly by their rules is the humour of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience, for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study, and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men condemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them, for they teach not their own use, but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to

weigh and consider Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested, that is, some books are to be read only in parts, others to be read, but not curiously, and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention Some books also may be read by deputy and extracts made of them by others, but that would be only in the less important arguments and the meaner sort of books, else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory, if he confer little, he had need have a present wit, and if he read little, he had need have much cunning to seem to know that he doth not Histories make men wise, poets witty, the mathematics subtle, natural philosophy deep, moral grave, logic and rhetoric able to contend *Abeunt studia in mores* Nay, there is no stond or impediment in the wit but may be wrought out by fit studies, like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises Bowling is good for the stone and reins, shooting for the lungs and breast, gentle walking for the stomach, riding for the head, and the like So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics, for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again, if his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the schoolmen, for they are *Cymm sectores* If he be not apt to beat over matters and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases, so every defect of the mind may have a special receipt

## Dream-Children A Reverie

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CHARLES LAMB

Charles Lamb (1775-1834) represents in his life and work the triumph of a cheerful spirit over poverty and affliction. For thirty-eight years he sacrificed his own desires to care for his sister Mary, occasional victim of a mania. More than thirty years a clerk in the India House, Lamb later gave his time to writing poems, tales, and essays. His delightful personality and charming style are seen best in the *Essays of Elia* (1823). More familiar than the pieces here reprinted are Lamb's "Old China," "A Dissertation Upon Roast Pig," and "The Praise of Chimney-Sweepers."

Like most of Lamb's work, this essay is partly autobiographical. The "great house in Norfolk" is Blakesware, Hertfordshire, where Lamb's grandmother, Mary Field, was housekeeper. "John" is Lamb's brother John, who died just before the essay was written. "Alice W—n" may be one Ann Simmons, for whom Lamb apparently had an attachment and who had married a merchant named Bartrum.

CHILDREN love to listen to stories about their elders, when they were children, to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle or grandame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene—so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country—of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the Children in the Wood. Certain it is that the whole story of the

children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimneypiece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts, till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say, how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by every body, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county, but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey, and stuck them up in Lady C's tawdry gilt drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, "that would be foolish indeed." And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighborhood for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman, so good indeed that she knew all the Psalter by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was, and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer—here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till upon my looking grave, it desisted—the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain, but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them



stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house, and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said "those innocents would do her no harm", and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she—and yet I never saw the infants. Here John expanded all his eyebrows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grand-children, having us to the great house in the holidays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the Twelve Cæsars, that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them, how I never could be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out—sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me—and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then,—and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir apples, which were good for nothing but to look at—or in lying about upon the fresh grass, with all the fine garden smells around me—or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth—or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings,—I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavours of

peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such like common baits of children Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes, which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grand-children, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L., because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us, and, instead of moping about in solitary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the county in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out—and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries—and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of every body, but of their great-grandmother Field most especially, and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy—for he was a good bit older than me—many a mile when I could not walk for pain,—and how in after life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowances enough for him when he was impatient, and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed, and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death, and how I bore his death as I thought pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me, and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarreling with him (for we quarreled sometimes), rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he their poor

uncle must have been when the doctor took off his limb Here the children fell a crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W—n, and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial meant in maidens—when suddenly, turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of re-presentment, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was, and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech, “We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all The children of Alice call Bartrum father We are nothing, less than nothing, and dreams We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before we have existence, and a name”—and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor arm-chair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side—but John L (or James Elia) was gone for ever

## On Getting Up on Cold Mornings

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LEIGH HUNT

James Henry Leigh Hunt (1784-1859), known usually by his last two names only, was a friend of Keats, Shelley, and Byron, and in his own right editor of several journals and author of plays, poems, and, especially, graceful and appreciative literary essays. The present is a good example of Hunt's ability to discover interest in the commonplace.

**A**N ITALIAN author—Giulio Cordara, a Jesuit—has written a poem upon insects, which he begins by insisting that those troublesome and abominable little animals were created for our annoyance, and that they were certainly not inhabitants of Paradise. We of the north may dispute this piece of theology, but on the other hand, it is as clear as the snow on the house-tops, that Adam was not under the necessity of shaving, and that when Eve walked out of her delicious bower, she did not step upon ice three inches thick.

Some people say it is a very easy thing to get up of a cold morning. You have only, they tell you, to take the resolution, and the thing is done. This may be very true, just as a boy at school has only to take a flogging, and the thing is over. But we have not at all made up our minds upon it, and we find it a very pleasant exercise to discuss the matter, candidly, before we get up. This, at least, is not idling, though it may be lying. It affords an excellent answer to those who ask how lying in bed can be indulged in by a reasoning being,—a rational creature. How? Why, with the argument calmly at work in one's head, and the clothes over one's shoulder. Oh—it is a fine way of spending a sensible, impartial half-hour.

If these people would be more charitable they would get on with their argument better. But they are apt to reason so ill, and to assert so dogmatically, that one could wish to have them stand round one's bed, of a bitter morning, and *lie* before their faces. They ought to hear both sides of the bed, the inside and out. If they cannot entertain themselves with their own thoughts for half an hour or so, it is not the fault of those who can.

Candid inquiries into one's decumbency, besides the greater or less privileges to be allowed a man in proportion to his ability of keeping early hours, the work given his faculties, etc., will at least concede their due merits to such representations as the following. In the first place, says the injured but calm appealer, I have been warm all night, and find my system in a state perfectly suitable to a warm-blooded animal. To get out of this state into the cold, besides the inharmonious and uncritical abruptness of the transition, is so unnatural to such a creature, that the poets, refining upon the tortures of the damned, make one of their greatest agonies consist in being suddenly transported from heat to cold,—from fire to ice. They are “haled” out of their “beds,” says Milton, by “harpy-footed furies,”—fellows who come to call them. On my first movement toward the anticipation of getting up I find that such parts of the sheets and bolster as are exposed to the air of the room are stone-cold. On opening my eyes, the first thing that meets them is my own breath rolling forth, as if in the open air, like smoke out of a chimney. Think of this symptom. Then I turn my eyes sideways and see the window all frozen over. Think of that. Then the servant comes in. “It is very cold this morning, is it not?”—“Very cold, sir.”—“Very cold indeed, isn’t it?”—“Very cold indeed, sir.”—“More than usually so, isn’t it, even for this weather?” (Here the servant’s wit and good nature are put to a considerable test, and the inquirer lies on thorns for the answer.) “Why, sir . . . I think it *is*.” (Good creature! There is not

a better or more truth-telling servant going ) "I must rise, however—get me some warm water"—Here comes a fine interval between the departure of the servant and the arrival of the hot water, during which, of course, it is of "no use" to get up The hot water comes "Is it quite hot?"—"Yes, sir"—"Perhaps too hot for shaving, I must wait a little?"—"No, sir, it will just do" (There is an over-nice propriety sometimes, an officious zeal of virtue, a little troublesome ) "Oh—the shirt—you must air my clean shirt,—linen gets very damp this weather"—"Yes, sir" Here another delicious five minutes A knock at the door "Oh, the shirt—very well My stockings—I think the stockings had better be aired, too"—"Very well, sir" Here another interval At length everything is ready, except myself

I now, continues our incumbent (a happy word, by the by, for a country vicar)—I now cannot help thinking a good deal—who can?—upon the unnecessary and villainous custom of shaving it is a thing so unmanly (here I nestle closer)—so effeminate (here I recoil from an unlucky step into a colder part of the bed)—No wonder that the Queen of France took part with the rebels against that degenerate king, her husband, who first affronted her smooth visage with a face like her own. The Emperor Julian never showed the luxuriancy of his genius to better advantage than in reviving the flowing beard Look at Cardinal Bembo's picture—at Michael Angelo's—at Titian's—at Shakespeare's—at Fletcher's—at Spenser's—at Chaucer's—at Alfred's—at Plato's—I could name a great man for every tick of my watch—Look at the Turks, a grave and otiose people—Think of Haroun Al Raschid and Bed-ridden Hassan.—Think of Wortley Montague, the worthy son of his mother, above the prejudice of his time—Look at the Persian gentlemen, whom one is ashamed of meeting about the suburbs, their dress and appearance are so much finer than our own—Lastly, think of the razor itself—how totally opposed to every sensation of bed—how cold, how edgy, how hard! how utterly

different from anything like the warm and circling amplitude, which

Sweetly recommends itself  
Unto our gentle senses

Add to this, benumbed fingers, which may help you to cut yourself, a quivering body, a frozen towel, and a ewer full of ice, and he that says there is nothing to oppose in all this, only shows that he has no merit in opposing it

Thomson the poet, who exclaims in his *Seasons*—

Falsely luxurious! Will not man awake?

used to lie in bed till noon, because he said he had no motive in getting up. He could imagine the good of rising, but then he could also imagine the good of lying still, and his exclamation, it must be allowed, was made upon summer-time, not winter. We must proportion the argument to the individual character. A money-getter may be drawn out of his bed by three or four pence, but this will not suffice for a student. A proud man may say, "What shall I think of myself, if I don't get up?" but the more humble one will be content to waive this prodigious notion of himself, out of respect to his kindly bed. The mechanical man shall get up without any ado at all, and so shall the barometer. An ingenious liar in bed will find hard matter of discussion even on the score of health and longevity. He will ask us for our proofs and precedents of the ill effects of lying later in cold weather, and sophisticate much on the advantages of an even temperature of the body, of the natural propensity (pretty universal) to have one's way, and of the animals that roll themselves up and sleep all the winter. As to longevity, he will ask whether the longest is of necessity the best, and whether Holborn is the handsomest street in London.

## Aes Triplex<sup>1</sup>

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ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894), though known primarily to most readers through his novels and children's poetry, was one of the most facile writers of the familiar essay. From his very personal, pleasant style and cheerful subject-matter, one would never guess that his life was a losing struggle against painful disease. His best-liked essays, besides this here reprinted, are "The Lantern-Bearers," "Pulvis et Umbra," and "An Apology for Idlers."

The title, "Tripple Bronze," is taken from an ode of Horace's (I, iii) "He was armed with oak and tripple bronze who first entrusted a frail bark to the fierce sea."

THE changes wrought by death are in themselves so sharp and final, and so terrible and melancholy in their consequences, that the thing stands alone in man's experience and has no parallel upon earth. It outdoes all other accidents because it is the last of them. Sometimes it leaps suddenly upon its victims, like a Thug, sometimes it lays a regular siege, and creeps upon their citadel during a score of years. And when the business is done, there is sore havoc made in other people's lives, and a pin knocked out by which many subsidiary friendships hung together. There are empty chairs, solitary walks, and single beds at night. Again, in taking away our friends, death does not take them away utterly, but leaves behind a mocking, tragical, and soon intolerable residue, which must be hurriedly concealed. Hence a whole chapter of sights and customs striking to the mind, from the pyramids of Egypt to the gibbets and dule trees of medieval Europe. The poorest

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted with the kind permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons.



persons have a bit of pageant going toward the tomb, memorial stones are set up over the least memorable, and, in order to preserve some show of respect for what remains of our old loves and friendships, we must accompany it with much grimly ludicrous ceremonial, and the hired undertaker parades before the door. All this, and much more of the same sort, accompanied by the eloquence of poets, has gone a great way to put humanity in error, nay, in many philosophies the error has been embodied and laid down with every circumstance of logic, although in real life the bustle and swiftness, in leaving people little time to think, have not left them time enough to go dangerously wrong in practice.

As a matter of fact, although few things are spoken of with more fearful whisperings than this prospect of death, few have less influence on conduct under healthy circumstances. We have all heard of cities of South America built upon the side of fiery mountains, and how, even in this tremendous neighborhood, the inhabitants are not a jot more impressed by the solemnity of mortal conditions than if they were delving gardens in the greenest corner of England. There are serenades and suppers, and much gallantry among the myrtles overhead, and meanwhile the foundation shudders underfoot, the bowels of the mountain growl, and at any moment living ruin may leap sky-high into the moonlight, and tumble man and his merry-making in the dust. In the eyes of very young people, and very dull old ones, there is something indescribably reckless and desperate in such a picture. It seems not credible that respectable married people, with umbrellas, should find appetite for a bit of supper within quite a long distance of a fiery mountain, ordinary life begins to smell of hugh-handed debauch when it is carried on so close to a catastrophe, and even cheese and salad, it seems, could hardly be relished in such circumstances without something like a defiance of the Creator. It should be a place for nobody but hermits dwelling in prayer and maceration, or mere born-devils drowning care in a perpetual carouse.

And yet, when one comes to think upon it calmly, the situation of these South American citizens forms only a very pale figure for the state of ordinary mankind. This world itself, travelling blindly and swiftly in overcrowded space, among a million other worlds travelling blindly and swiftly in contrary directions, may very well come by a knock that would set it into explosion like a penny squib. And what, pathologically looked at, is the human body, with all its organs, but a mere bagful of petards? The least of these is as dangerous to the whole economy as the ship's powder-magazine to the ship, and with every breath we breathe, and every meal we eat, we are putting one or more of them in peril. If we clung as devotedly as some philosophers pretend we do to the abstract idea of life, or were half as frightened as they make out we are for the subversive accident that ends it all, the trumpets might sound by the hour and no one would follow them into battle—the blue-peter might fly at the truck, but who would climb into a sea-going ship? Think (if these philosophers were right) with what a preparation of spirit we should affront the daily peril of the dinner-table—a deadlier spot than any battle-field in history, where the far greater proportion of our ancestors have miserably left their bones! What woman would ever be lured into marriage, so much more dangerous than the wildest sea? And what would it be to grow old? For, after a certain distance, every step we take in life we find the ice growing thinner below our feet, and all around us and behind us we see our contemporaries going through. By the time a man gets well into the seventies, his continued existence is a mere miracle, and when he lays his old bones in bed for the night, there is an overwhelming probability that he will never see the day. Do the old men mind it, as a matter of fact? Why, no. They were never merrier, they have their grog at night, and tell the raciest stories, they hear of the death of people about their own age, or even younger, not as if it was a grisly warning, but with a simple childlike pleasure at having out-lived someone else, and when a draught might puff them out

like a guttering candle, or a bit of a stumble shatter them like so much glass, their old hearts keep sound and unaffrighted, and they go on, bubbling with laughter, through years of man's age compared to which the valley at Balaklava was as safe and peaceful as a village cricket-green on Sunday. It may fairly be questioned (if we look to the peril only) whether it was a much more daring feat for Curtius to plunge into the gulf, than for any old gentleman of ninety to doff his clothes and clamber into bed.

Indeed, it is a memorable subject for consideration, with what unconcern and gaiety mankind pricks on along the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The whole way is one wilderness of snares, and the end of it, for those who fear the last pinch, is irrevocable ruin. And yet we go spinning through it all, like a party for the Derby. Perhaps the reader remembers one of the humorous devices of the deified Caligula: how he encouraged a vast concourse of holiday-makers on to his bridge over Baiæ bay, and when they were in the height of their enjoyment, turned loose the Prætorian guards among the company, and had them tossed into the sea. This is no bad miniature of the dealings of nature with the transitory race of man. Only, what a checkered picnic we have of it, even while it lasts! and into what great waters, not to be crossed by any swimmer, God's pale Prætorian throws us over in the end!

We live the time that a match flickers, we pop the cork of a ginger-beer bottle, and the earthquake swallows us on the instant. Is it not odd, is it not incongruous, is it not, in the highest sense of human speech, incredible, that we should think so highly of the ginger-beer, and regard so little the devouring earthquake? The love of Life and the fear of Death are two famous phrases that grow harder to understand the more we think about them. It is a well-known fact that an immense proportion of boat accidents would never happen if people held the sheet in their hands instead of making it fast, and yet, unless it be some martinet of a professional

mariner, or some landsman with shattered nerves, every one of God's creatures makes it fast. A strange instance of man's unconcern and brazen boldness in the face of death!

We confound ourselves with metaphysical phrases, which we import into daily talk with noble inappropriateness. We have no idea of what death is, apart from its circumstances and some of its consequences to others, and although we have some experience of living, there is not a man on earth who has flown so high into abstraction as to have any practical guess at the meaning of the word *life*. All literature, from Job and Omar Khayyam to Thomas Carlyle or Walt Whitman, is but an attempt to look upon the human state with such largeness of view as shall enable us to rise from the consideration of living to the Definition of Life. And our sages give us about the best satisfaction in their power when they say that it is a vapor, or a show, or made of the same stuff with dreams. Philosophy, in its more rigid sense, has been at the same work for ages, and after a myriad bald heads have wagged over the problem, and piles of words have been heaped one upon another into dry and cloudy volumes without end, philosophy has the honor of laying before us, with modest pride, her contribution toward the subject: that life is a Permanent Possibility of Sensation. Truly a fine result! A man may very well love beef, or hunting, or a woman, but surely, surely not a Permanent Possibility of Sensation! He may be afraid of a precipice, or a dentist, or a large enemy with a club, or even an undertaker's man, but not, certainly, of abstract death. We may trick with the word *life* in its dozen senses until we are weary of tricking, we may argue in terms of all the philosophies on earth, but one fact remains true throughout—that we do not love life, in the sense that we are greatly pre-occupied about its conservation—that we do not, properly speaking, love life at all, but living. Into the views of the least careful there will enter some degree of providence, no man's eyes are fixed entirely on the passing hour, but although we have some anticipation of good health, good weather, wine,

active employment, love, and self-approval, the sum of these anticipations does not amount to anything like a general view of life's possibilities and issues, nor are those who cherish them most vividly, at all the most scrupulous of their personal safety. To be deeply interested in the accidents of our existence, to enjoy keenly the mixed texture of human experience, rather leads a man to disregard precautions, and risk his neck against a straw. For surely the love of living is stronger in an Alpine climber roping over a peril, or a hunter riding merrily at a stiff fence, than in a creature who lives upon a diet and walks a measured distance in the interest of his constitution.

There is a great deal of very vile nonsense talked upon both sides of the matter: tearing divines reducing life to the dimensions of a mere funeral procession, so short as to be hardly decent, and melancholy unbelievers yearning for the tomb as if it were a world too far away. Both sides must feel a little ashamed of their performances now and again when they draw in their chairs to dinner. Indeed, a good meal and a bottle of wine is an answer to most standard works upon the question. When a man's heart warms to his viands, he forgets a great deal of sophistry, and soars into a rosy zone of contemplation. Death may be knocking at the door, like the Commander's statue, we have something else in hand, thank God, and let him knock. Passing bells are ringing the world over. All the world over, and every hour, some one is parting company with all his aches and ecstasies. For us also the trap is laid. But we are so fond of life that we have no leisure to entertain the terror of death. It is a honeymoon with us all through, and none of the longest. Small blame to us if we give our whole hearts to this glowing bride of ours, to the appetites, to honor, to the hungry curiosity of the mind, to the pleasure of the eyes in nature, and the pride of our own nimble bodies.

We all of us appreciate the sensations, but as for caring about the Permanence of the Possibility, a man's head is gen-

erally very bald, and his senses very dull, before he comes to that. Whether we regard life as a lane leading to a dead wall—a mere bag's end, as the French say—or whether we think of it as a vestibule or a gymnasium, where we wait our turn and prepare our faculties for some more noble destiny, whether we thunder in a pulpit, or pule in little atheistic poetry-books, about its vanity and brevity, whether we look justly for years of health and vigor, or are about to mount into a Bath-chair, as a step toward the hearse, in each and all of these views and situations there is but one conclusion possible—that a man should stop his ears against paralyzing terror, and run the race that is set before him with a single mind. No one surely could have recoiled with more heartache and terror from the thought of death than our respected lexicographer, and yet we know how little it affected his conduct, how wisely and boldly he walked, and in what a fresh and lively vein he spoke of life. Already an old man, he ventured on his Highland tour, and his heart, bound with tripple brass, did not recoil before twenty-seven individual cups of tea. As courage and intelligence are the two qualities best worth a good man's cultivation, so it is the first part of intelligence to recognize our precarious estate in life, and the first part of courage to be not at all abashed before the fact. A frank and somewhat headlong carriage, not looking too anxiously before, not dallying in maudlin regret over the past, stamps the man who is well armored for this world.

And not only well armored for himself, but a good friend and a good citizen to boot. We do not go to cowards for tender dealing, there is nothing so cruel as panic, the man who has least fear for his own carcass, has most time to consider others. That eminent chemist who took his walks abroad in tin shoes, and subsisted wholly upon tepid milk, had all his work cut out for him in considerate dealings with his own digestion. So soon as prudence has begun to grow up in the brain, like a dismal fungus, it finds its first expression in a paralysis of generous acts. The victim begins to shrink spirit-

ually, he develops a fancy for parlors with a regulated temperature, and takes his morality on the principle of tin shoes and tepid milk. The care of one important body or soul becomes so engrossing, that all the noises of the outer world begin to come thin and faint into the parlor with the regulated temperature, and the tin shoes go equably forward over blood and rain. To be otherwise is to ossify, and the scruple-monger ends by standing stock-still. Now the man who has his heart on his sleeve, and a good whirling weathercock of a brain, who reckons his life as a thing to be dashingly used and cheerfully hazarded, makes a very different acquaintance of the world, keeps all his pulses going true and fast, and gathers impetus as he runs, until, if he be running toward anything better than wildfire, he may shoot up and become a constellation in the end. Lord, look after his health, Lord, have a care of his soul, says he, and he has at the key of the position, and swashes through incongruity and peril toward his aim. Death is on all sides of him with pointed batteries, as he is on all sides of all of us, unfortunate surprises gird him round, mum-mouthed friends and relations hold up their hands in quite a little elegiacal synod about his path and what cares he for all this? Being a true lover of living, a fellow with something pushing and spontaneous in his inside, he must, like any other soldier, in any other stirring, deadly warfare, push on at his best pace until he touch the goal. "A peerage or Westminster Abbey!" cried Nelson in his bright, boyish, heroic manner. These are great incentives, not for any of these, but for the plain satisfaction of living, of being about their business in some sort or other, do the brave, serviceable men of every nation tread down the nettle danger, and pass flying over all the stumbling-blocks of prudence. Think of the heroism of Johnson, think of that superb indifference to mortal limitation that set him upon his dictionary, and carried him through triumphantly until the end! Who, if he were wisely considerate of things at large, would ever embark upon any work much more considerable than a half penny post-card?

Who would project a serial novel, after Thackeray and Dickens had each fallen in mid-course? Who would find heart enough to begin to live, if he dallied with the consideration of death?

And, after all, what sorry and pitiful quibbling all this is! To forego all the issues of living, in a parlor with the regulated temperature—as if that were not to die a hundred times over, and for ten years at a stretch! As if it were not to die in one's own lifetime, and without even the sad immunities of death! As if it were not to die, and yet be the patient spectators of our own pitiable change! The Permanent Possibility is preserved, but the sensations carefully held at arm's length, as if one kept a photographic plate in a dark chamber. It is better to lose health like a spendthrift than to waste it like a muser. It is better to live and be done with it, than to die daily in the sickroom. By all means begin your folio, even if the doctor does not give you a year, even if he hesitates about a month, make one brave push and see what can be accomplished in a week. It is not only in finished undertakings that we ought to honor useful labor. A spirit goes out of the man who means execution, which outlives the most untimely ending. All who have meant good work with their whole hearts, have done good work, although they may die before they have the time to sign it. Every heart that has beat strong and cheerfully has left a hopeful impulse behind it in the world, and bettered the tradition of mankind. And even if death catch people, like an open pitfall, and in mid-career, laying out vast projects, and planning monstrous foundations, flushed with hope, and their mouths full of boastful language, they should be at once tripped up and silenced. Is there not something brave and spirited in such a termination? and does not life go down with a better grace, foaming in full body over a precipice, than miserably straggling to an end in sandy deltas? When the Greeks made their fine saying that those whom the gods love die young, I cannot help believing they had this sort of death also in their eye. For surely, at whatever age it overtake the



man, this is to die young. Death has not been suffered to take so much as an illusion from his heart. In the hot-fit of life, a-tiptoe on the highest point of being, he passes at a bound on to the other side. The noise of the mallet and chisel is scarcely quenched, the trumpets are hardly done blowing, when, trailing with him clouds of glory, this happy-starred, full-blooded spirit shoots into the spiritual land.

## The World of Babbitt's Son 1942<sup>1</sup>

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HENRY HAZLITT

Henry Hazlitt (1894- ) has held many positions as financial and literary writer and editor of such important periodicals as *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Evening Post*, *The New York Evening Mail*, and *The New York Sun*. Since January, 1930, he has been literary editor of *The Nation*.

*Report of a visit of Ted Babbitt of Zenith, Ohio, to Brent Dodsworth on Long Island in the summer of 1942*

THE temptation to speculate upon the kind of physical and economic world that most of us will be living in ten years from now is too great to be put aside. Compared, at all events, with the efforts of men like Jeans and Eddington and Haldane to tell us what conditions on earth will be like when the sun begins to cool, such prophecy seems as narrowly practical and immediate as that of a clothing manufacturer making his plans for next spring. For at least five out of every six of us (future death rates have proved to be very accurately predictable) ten years from now means *our* world, not that of our remoter descendants.

Perhaps our conjectures will seem more plausible if we pretend not to be predicting at all, but merely to be recalling. So let us assume that it is a late Friday afternoon in the summer of 1942, and that we are seeing the world through the eyes—though not altogether through the mind—of Theodore Roosevelt Babbitt, son of George F. Babbitt. Ted, you will

<sup>1</sup> From *Scribner's Magazine*. Reprinted with the kind permission of the author and Charles Scribner's Sons.

recall, was about eighteen years old in 1922, and his marriage to Eunice Littlefield was the last act in the book. He is about thirty-eight now, himself the father of a seventeen-year-old daughter and a son of twelve. But Eunice and Myra are now travelling in Europe, and young Herbie is at a boy's camp in Maine, so this Friday afternoon we happen to find Ted in his private airplane, going about a hundred and eighty miles an hour on his way from Zenith for a week-end visit to Brent Dodsworth (Sam's son) who is now living on Long Island.

Ted has done pretty well in the electrical-equipment business, otherwise he could not afford to sport a Packard plane in addition to a Cadillac car. Private planes are still comparatively rare, there are only a little more than a million of them in the country, as compared with more than thirty million automobiles, and Ted himself did not buy one until the motor had been silenced, and the device perfected in 1938 that enabled planes to rise and land vertically.

Ted is looking down on the countryside. It is not altogether an attractive picture. It is covered with fine broad concrete roads, but it has been virtually swept bare of trees where the roads have been laid down, and planted with telephone posts instead.

For the most part it is an even uglier countryside than it was in 1932. There is not much to boast of in most of the architecture. Many of the older houses are in the fake Tudor style that broke out over the country in the late twenties and early thirties. But there have been some improvements. Most of the filling stations have been taken over by the great oil companies, there are fewer of them than there were a decade ago, and they are individually much more attractive. The greater part of them are built in concrete, without decoration of any kind, but some of the newer ones are in chromium and glass. And in 1936 a serious movement began, which has since been growing, to plant rows of trees along all the automobile highways. The trees so far planted are still rather small, unfortunately, and can hardly be seen at all from the height

at which Ted is flying. But the factories are almost uniformly more attractive, and one very great gain has been the total abolition in some of the States of advertising sign boards. And between Zenith and New York there are already two or three of the new "garden cities," thoughtfully planned and spaciouly laid out, full of trees and parks, made up of dwellings and business structures of a harmonious architecture. To be sure, these cities have been made possible only by methods which Ted has often denounced as communistic—but he has to admit that he admires them.

Ted's own interests are practical rather than æsthetic, and what fascinates him much more than the garden cities are these new metal houses produced by mass-production methods along the lines suggested more than a decade ago by Buckminster Fuller, which have just begun to make their appearance in the last year or two. Young Dodsworth had telephoned Ted that he was living in one of these, and though Ted had seen the exact duplicate of it (the eight-room model of the General Homes Corporation), he was curious to find how it felt to spend the week-end in one.

Now he is nearing New York City, and slows down. (It has been possible for the last two or three years to go as slowly as you want in an airplane.) Ted has not been in or over New York for nearly two months now, and he is constantly excited by the changes there. The traffic conditions are still unspeakably bad, indeed, they are much worse than they have ever been, and even Ted doesn't understand how anyone can want to live there. (Of course the traffic congestion in Zenith is much worse, too.) Up to 1939 there had been no legal height limit to office buildings, and their mad erection, stimulated by real-estate values and puerile pride in height records, had gone on. In spite of the elementary mathematics of the situation, the connection between high buildings and congestion was for years either ignored or denied. A child of six might have been expected to understand that if you doubled the average building height in a city you doubled the popula-

tion that it housed and hence you doubled the congestion on the same street area, but the real-estate interests and the structural-steel interests, by the most energetic propaganda against this idea, had successfully fought the popular recognition of its truth for years, and even when they were no longer able to do that, they were able, for a few years, to bring various sorts of pressure on politicians to prevent any ordinance limiting building height from being adopted. But finally, in 1939, a measure had been adopted limiting the height of new buildings to twenty stories. This has done nothing so far to cure the congestion, it cannot, of course, begin to have any effect in that direction until the older skyscrapers become obsolescent and are torn down. Meanwhile the erection of twenty-story buildings where twelve-, ten-, and four-story buildings have been before is not helping matters.

Ted prefers to look for one of these new open or "aerated" city blocks, several of which have been erected in the last year. Instead of a solid wall of buildings facing the street on all four sides, the block is composed of a series of detached X-shaped buildings (except that the cross is at right angles) each twenty stories in height. From Ted's view, looking directly down, one of these blocks seems to be composed of a double row of X's or turned plus signs

X X X X X X  
X X X X X X

This allows the free play of light and air on every side of each building. As the rear of each building can be seen by pedestrians on the street behind it, and as the sides can also be seen, each building is of course finished on all sides, instead of consisting, like so many of the older structures, of an elaborate and expensive façade, and sides and rear of cheap brick. Between the buildings are foot paths, permitting pedestrians to walk directly through the block at any point. The rest of the open area between buildings is planted with grass, flowers, and trees, most of which, of course, can be seen from

the street, and are equally pleasant from an airplane view. Since the airplane has become popular, too, the new buildings have been paying more attention to the appearance of their roofs. These are flat, surrounded by chromium steel railings, and paved with attractive colored tilings. The roofs are used a great deal by sunbathers, many of whom are nude, and though Ted always finds the sight of pretty girl sunbathers—on roofs or beaches—a very pleasant one, he is too accustomed to the spectacle to become excited by it.

But Ted has to be getting on, so that he can find Brent's place when it is still light. He finds it with little difficulty, and Brent shows him through it with great pride.

It is an odd place for Ted's eye to become accustomed to, and looks from the outside like a hexagonal steel-and-glass tent raised slightly from the ground on a thick hollow steel pole.

"Yes," says Brent, in reply to Ted's observation to this effect, "in fact the house is put up pretty much the way you would put up a tent. The General Homes Corporation deliver the parts of this 1942 model house and have one of their assembly crews erect it in two or three days. First they actually *bore* a hole in the ground, then they sink the central supporting shaft into it, and then they *hang* the house from the shaft."

"Gosh!" says Ted in admiration.

"You see," Brent goes on (he is, incidentally, an officer in General Homes), "suppose for some reason a man should become dissatisfied with the location his house was on. Suppose the neighborhood should begin to run down, or suppose he should have to take a job out at Toledo. Well, if he had an old-fashioned house, he'd have to try to sell it, he'd probably have it on his hands a long time and then sacrifice it. But with this house, he can just 'phone General Homes, and within a week we'll dismantle it, transport it, and have it erected again on the new site. All he has to worry about is selling the land. At the end of ten years the house will still

have a good trade-in value. It can be much more easily sold than the old-fashioned house because it can be transported to any site, because it conforms to standard specifications, and because our national reputation stands squarely behind it."

Ted felt uncomfortably that Brent was handing him an habitual sales talk, but nevertheless he was impressed. "What's this?" he asked, pointing to some brightly polished gadgets.

"The one on the left is the heating thermostat, and the one on the right the cooling thermostat. This house holds a temperature of 70°, if you want, winter and summer."

"I have the same sort of thing at my house in Zenith," brags Ted.

"I know, but I bet it cost you four times as much. An old-fashioned individual-type house of the same quality as this couldn't be built for less than \$20,000. This one sells for \$6,495 f o b Detroit, and once the company can put this model into *real* quantity production, it will be able to sell it for \$3,000."

"Well, I tell you, Brent, this is a mighty swell house, and all that, but I should think you'd want something more—well, individual. I don't see how a man can take a lot of pride in a house that's just exactly like a hundred thousand others."

"Listen, Ted, you're pretty stuck on your Packard plane, now, aren't you?"

"You bet."

"And you're pretty proud of your Cadillac, aren't you?"

"Sure I am."

"Well, there are at least ten thousand duplicates of your Packard plane and several hundred thousand duplicates of your Cadillac."

"Yep, I never thought of that."

"Just because your dad was kidded a lot, Ted, you're afraid of the word 'standardization.' But there's nothing wrong with that at all, provided it's *good* standardization."

Ted and Brent sink into armchairs with their cocktails and begin to talk about the business situation, but we can hardly

understand their conversation unless we know what has happened in the last ten years. The recovery from the panic of 1929-32 was a slow one. From the perspective of 1942 it has become clear that the depression was the result of two main causes. The first was the collapse of world commodities from the inflated war price-levels. For nearly a decade after the war these price-levels had stayed up, or had declined slowly and harmlessly—except for the sharp drop between the spring of 1920 and the spring of 1921—and the curious impression had become all but universal that commodity prices as a result of the war had reached a permanently higher level, but in 1929, 1930, and 1931 the decline had become a rout. There was of course nothing sacrosanct or particularly permanent about the price-level of 1913, but the record of prices after the Napoleonic Wars and our own Civil War should have indicated that prices, given time, manage after a war to return to somewhere near the levels they started from. The second cause for the depression was also connected with the war, but more indirectly. It lay in the almost insane post-war economic policies of Europe and the United States. As everyone knows, the economic burden laid upon Germany had been more than could possibly be met, and the United States, while professing to wish to collect its war debts, had kept raising its tariff higher and higher to make it impossible for Europe to pay the debt in goods, the only possible ultimate medium. Imitation of, and retaliation against, the United States brought the erection of preposterous tariff walls everywhere, and choked the channels of world trade. None of these policies was modified until it had already brought disastrous consequences, and even then the modification never went far enough. There is no need here to rehearse at length the painful events during the period of readjustment—the wage reductions, strikes, riots by the unemployed, the collapse in rents, and the long series of receiver-ships, especially of important railroads. By the fall of 1933 most of this readjustment had been accomplished, and the recovery in 1934 was fairly rapid. The railroads were finally



taken over by the government in 1935—for the most part to the relief of the railway security holders, who took a cut in nominal interest but most of whom, at least among the bondholders, were able to salvage their principal. The difference between the railroads under public and under private management was not so great as to remove discussion of the relative merits of the two systems. Most business men complained that the roads were much more bureaucratically and less efficiently run than under private management, but they had to admit that freight rates were lower, as there was no longer any need for having an unnecessarily high general freight-rate level mainly for the purpose of keeping the less profitable roads going. The railroads, however, seemed to be growing relatively less important each year. Though they still carried the bulk of the heavy freight for long hauls, lighter freight for short hauls was more and more being carried by trucks, and in the last five years the roads had been losing passenger business rapidly to the airplane lines.

Public-utility companies had been falling more and more into government hands, but general attention was now focussed, not on these, but on the great industrial companies. These had gone through one process of merger after another, or had formed trade associations which acted, for the most part, exactly as a single company would have acted. The Sherman anti-trust act remained on the books, but had virtually become a dead letter. First the oil and natural gas companies had been made almost exempt from its provisions. Indeed, competing oil companies drilling wells in the same "pool" had been in many cases legally compelled to merge. Then, as other industries came to be controlled by single companies, or were bound together by tight trade associations, special government regulatory bodies, modelled after the Interstate Commerce Commission, had been appointed to control their practices, prices, and output, and these commissions for separate indus-

tries were in turn co-ordinated by a central commission, composed of the chairmen of each of the other commissions. Ted and Brent talk for a long time of how commission-infested the whole country has become, and of the enormous red tape and bureaucracy involved in the system, and they relate to each other various absurd errors made by the individual commissions and the co-ordinating commission. But the situation of private industry has become more and more confused. Mergers and the holding-company system have gone to the length where it has become almost impossible to trace the connection between the ultimate security holder and the individual property. In fact, most investors have their funds in the securities of investment trusts, which have their funds in the securities of holding companies, which have their funds in the securities of other holding companies, and so on. It has become more ridiculous than ever before to talk of any connection between the ultimate stockholder's "vote" and the actual policies of the underlying operating companies. The separation between management and ownership has become practically as great, in other words, in the industries that are not yet subject to commission control as in those that are.

The situation is confused in other directions. In 1934, for example, when it became clear that Russia, with its low-cost wheat, was driving the high-cost American wheat farmer out of business, and when the latter had finally seen through wheat tariffs and "price-stabilizing" Farm Boards, it was finally decided that nothing could save him but lower production costs. Taking its cue from Russia, our government formed a great harvesting machinery company, and proceeded to rent tractors and other agricultural equipment and services to farmers at cost. This had been highly successful, for the most part, but a protracted discussion was now going on in Congress on the question of whether this corporation should remain in the hands of the Federal Government or be sold to a private syndicate.

Compulsory unemployment insurance had finally been

adopted in most of the States with the exception of those in the Southeast, and Statewide employment agencies had been created. Congress had passed a Constitutional amendment for Federal unemployment insurance, but this had not yet been ratified by the States. A few of the States, also, had adopted schools to take care of workers dropped from obsolescent and dying industries and to train them as workers in one of the growing industries. In these States no worker could receive unemployment benefits for more than three to six months without enrolling in one of the schools.

The country had not gone communist, but the possibility of its doing so was no longer small. As the Communist party had grown year by year, the Republicans and Democrats, recognizing that there was no difference between them, had merged into one Republican-Democratic party (usually referred to simply as the Republican party). The Republicans had been able to elect a President in 1940, but by a rather narrow popular margin. There was a possibility of a Communist majority in Congress after the 1942 elections, and the Communists were confident of electing a President in 1944. The Communist party was controlled, however, by moderates, and was not very different in its immediate aims from the old Socialist party—but the word Communism had acquired prestige and the word Socialism had lost it. Communism in Russia had been successful, in the sense that it had remained in power, but it had gradually come to look more and more like a combination of State and private capitalism.

This was not considered important, however, as the Communists continued to describe everything they did in orthodox Marxian phrases—just as organized Christianity had been able to pursue a Nietzschean policy with the aid of phrases taken from the Sermon on the Mount. (The Communists had also taken another idea from Christianity, or at least from Catholicism. They did not permit their own population to read volumes that were unfavorable to Communism either directly or by implication, but in order to answer capitalistic arguments

they had formed a sort of Jesuit society, the members of which were not only permitted but encouraged to study heretical books with the purpose of confuting them ) American capitalism, on the other hand, had come to look more and more like State socialism, but in spite of the fact that this State socialism was growing yearly, our statesmen continued to describe our system as one of rugged individualism, and to point proudly to our steadfast adherence to Jeffersonian principles

The economic problem that is now causing the greatest concern to the world, however, is that of the gold standard. A German chemist, using the advanced knowledge of the atom, succeeded two years ago in producing gold artificially at about the price of copper. Prices all over the world rose violently as the first of this gold came on the market, and the immediate effect threatened to be much the same as the after-war depreciation of the mark and other European currencies. It is now recognized everywhere that the gold standard is doomed. Individual nations, the United States included, have hurriedly adopted "compensated dollar" schemes similar to that long ago advocated by Irving Fisher, but these schemes have worked very badly, and an international conference has been called to meet in the autumn for some possible joint action.

To be sure, Ted and Brent do not talk of all these things, like you and I, they talk mainly of their immediate personal affairs, and especially of the shortcomings of their mutual friends, and even more especially of the shortcomings of Brent's second wife, Eva, who is now in Reno getting a divorce. Reno, to meet the competition of other cities, has had to cut the residence period down to one week. Some of the States have adopted more liberal divorce laws, but New York—though it has legalized birth control—has changed its divorce laws very little. But as divorce has become so easy to obtain in a number of Western cities, the pressure for more liberal divorce laws in the Eastern States has not been great.

"Yes," Brent is saying, "Eva's a fine girl, I haven't a thing

against her, but she's too unsettled, always wanting to be on the go I don't know, it doesn't seem to me that you can find many women now who like to stay at home a little I wish there were more old-fashioned women like those of ten years ago "

"Trouble is to-day," agrees Ted, "every woman's got some career of her own There's Myra, going to study to be a doctor Every woman to-day wants to be a doctor, or a lawyer, or a politician, or to run a business —"

"Yes," adds Brent, "things are speeding up too much, too Civilization's getting too complex Ten years ago things were simple and quiet "

"But then, there're a lot of advantages," Ted reminds him "What did people do with their evenings then? No television, for example "

"You're right," concedes Brent, "it's hard to imagine what people did without television By the way, we don't want to miss the government's fine programme to-night "

They turn on the machine, and a musical comedy is before their eyes But they look at it only occasionally, and hardly seem to be listening to it They go on with their own conversation "Mark my word," says Ted solemnly as they sit drinking their highballs, "within two years prohibition will be repealed "

## Radio Goes Educational<sup>1</sup>

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TRAVIS HOKE

Travis Henderson Hoke (1892 ) has held editorial positions on well-known periodicals, including *The American Weekly* and *Popular Science Monthly*. He has contributed essays on an interesting variety of subjects to the better magazines.

AMERICAN enlightenment is, of course, the greatest in the world. The United States has the biggest schools and keeps people in them longest. It has the most foundations, conferences, and seminars, and its art-collecting, religion, and opera cost the most. No other nation takes so many courses, hears so many lectures, sends for so many booklets.

However magnificent our erudition and polish may be now, they may one day seem like stammerings from a torn primer. Now only one of four inhabitants gives all his time to education, but soon the whole population will be exposed to it, and Americans may turn out to be the most extensively educated, intensively cultured race that ever lived. This is to be achieved by—radio. So, at least, we are told.

Educators organized for the purpose are engaged, even now, in compelling radio broadcasters to obey the dictum of Mr. Ira E. Robinson, formerly of the Federal Radio Commission, that "all expression over the radio should be of inspiring and enlightening order." The sanctity of the home and school, the foundations of our government, should be preserved and nurtured by the use of the radio.

At the moment broadcasting falls short of the Robinson standards, it must be conceded, but in extenuation there are

<sup>1</sup> From *Harper's Magazine*. Reprinted by permission of the author.

circumstances to be cited such as its youth and, especially, its nature

Radio is, essentially, a means by which sound may be communicated to an illimitable number of ears. Many sound impulses at a time may occupy the ether, but for reasons that pertain both to physics and to public policy the number of ether lanes has been limited, in the United States, to ninety. Six hundred and fourteen broadcasting stations occupy the channels, but since a number, grouped as "chains" and "networks," merely relay the same sounds, some 450 or 550 different sounds are being broadcast at a given moment. The sounds are chiefly those of the human voice or of musical instruments, and each station broadcasts them for periods up to twenty hours a day. The kind of sound or the agency producing it is changed, on an average, every fifteen minutes, and the groups of sounds, or "programs," are picked up by the 14,000,000 receiving sets of the country, which serve an audience of 55,000,000 who spend more than 100,000,000 hours a day in listening.

The reason for this staccato uproar is not merely the American love of noise for its own sake, but another habit that is also partly nervous, that of selling things. The first commercial broadcasting stations were opened, in 1920, for the purpose of selling radio receiving sets, and no time was lost thereafter in discovering that broadcasting could sell other goods also, as well as services, beliefs, half-truths, and lies. The prime object of broadcasting, then, has always been to make the greatest possible number of people listen. It was assumed that the way to make people listen was to give them, free, something entertaining to listen to, that only a limited number of kinds of sound were entertaining to the majority of people, and that if the entertainment were satisfactory its hearers would be substantially grateful to those who supplied it. These assumptions are still held valid.

Thus advertisers pay for—"sponsor"—much of the broadcast entertainment, and the stations themselves pay for the rest,

which, with engaging candor, they call "sustaining" programs. One widely sold cigarette offers the high-crooner Downey, the inevitable band, and an Anthony Wons who recites rhymes of viscous optimism and whose Scrapbook was the best selling book published in America last year. The black-face team of Amos 'n' Andy, during whose nightly fifteen minutes the telephones of the nation used to be silent, are hired by a toothpaste manufacturer, one of whose rivals sponsored the astrologer Evangeline Adams. Irvin S. Cobb has broadcast, not incongruously, for a meat packer, Count von Luckner talks for a cod liver oil, Beatrice Fairfax advises the lovelorn through a cosmetic firm's Romance Exchange, Lawrence Tibbett, from grand opera, is the "voice" of an automobile tire. A proprietary drug is the reason for the excellent Mills Brothers, the mad Stoopnagle and Budd—unique in that they satirize radio inanities—perform in honor of a toilet soap, and Uncle Don, thought to have a way with children, is roguish impartially for an ice cream and a savings bank.

Most of the calisthenic commands and cooking recipes that fill the morning air are "sustaining," for not many advertisers find valuable the hours before noon, but rival breakfast food manufacturers hire persons to be jovial as early as 7:45, Colonel Goodbody dramatizes *Our Daily Food* for a chain of grocery stores, and *La Monica* is at the organ for Mrs. Wagner's pies. In midmorning the cosmetic and department store people burst forth, and until six in the evening almost everything on the air is aimed at the housewife. From six-thirty on, the programs become more expensive to advertisers, for then the greatest radio audience is assembled, and only star performers are worthy to be heard. Public utilities, coffees, razor blades, chewing gum, cigarettes, ginger ales, more cosmetics—all trying to get themselves listened to.

Certainly in all this jabberwocky of saxophones and soap there is little that Judge Robinson would find inspiring and enlightening, and still less that does much about the sanctity of home and school. Radio, frankly, has been trying to entertain



the greatest possible number of people and sell them the greatest possible number of things

But the picture is not as somber as it was. Broadcasting for some time has moved toward higher quality in entertainment, there are programs that an adult of cultural pretensions may listen to with comfort—symphony orchestras, civilized clowning, first-rate jazz, and—assuming for the sake of peace that grand opera is adult—grand opera. In the past two years there has been a great stir about elevating programs, and now at last radio, a spur buried in either flank, is going to take the upward leap. The stimuli for this sudden bound are the public and the educators.

## II

With so many costly noises to hear, it might be thought that the radio audience would be well content, but there are mutterings. Either programs are shopworn or advertisers are overreaching themselves with sales talks, whatever the reason, there is dissatisfaction with broadcasting. There is less rapt attention to Amos 'n' Andy, Rudy Vallee may have lost a maiden heart or two, sales talks are tuned out, and protests creep into the fan mail. Dissatisfaction has not, it is true, reached the point of silencing receivers, radio may have lost novelty, but meanwhile the public has fastened upon itself the habit of hearing, and it has long been trained to take what is given. Nevertheless, there is enough public discontent with radio to offer an indirect reason for its impending revision upward. But the immediate cause is the fight of the educators for control of the air, of which Mr. James Rorty has told so ably in *Harper's*.

The educators who want radio for culture are led by a militant offshoot of the National Education Association, the National Committee on Education by Radio, composed of representatives of the American Council on Education, the National Education Association, the Association of Land Grant

Colleges, the National Association of State Universities, the National Council of State Superintendence, the National Catholic Educational Association, the Jesuit Educational Association, the National University Extension Association, and the Association of College and University Broadcasting Stations The N C E R believes in the use of radio in schools, and its contentions are that radio in the United States is a monopoly which deprives the public of its rights to the air, that commercial broadcasting is uneducational, that if the public had its way, broadcasting would be educational, that broadcasters do not know how to educate, and that educators should be allowed to do such broadcasting As an opening wedge, therefore, these educators back the Fess Bill assigning fifteen per cent of the radio facilities of the country to educational institutions (Mr Tracy F Tyler, their secretary, calls it an insignificant percentage), and meanwhile fight a running battle with the Federal Radio Commission over the licensing of educational stations

The broadcasters reply that they are already doing much by way of educational programs, that if the public wants still more they will supply it, that educators do not know how to broadcast, and that even educational broadcasting should be done by the established broadcasters Rowelled by public, educators, and politicians, they utter the holy word with as much reverence as do educators, they proclaim a desire to become a shining tower of culture, but they would rather have advertisers than taxpayers keep it shining

Already there is more educating going on than might be supposed. The chain stores of the air, National and Columbia, maintain departments of education Columbia has the American School of the Air, NBC's Doctor Damrosch broadcasts appreciation of music to 6,500,000 listeners, mostly children, and working men are educated on Monday afternoons in "fundamental economic principles to the end that the policy of labor should be more intelligent" by that able educator of working men, Professor Irving Fisher of Yale There are radio univer-

sities such as the Pacific Coast School of the Air, many terrestrial universities give radio courses, and there is more than idle talk of a Harvard Hour. Ames College, in Iowa, gives such educational programs as "Father's Place in the Home," "Frocks for Furniture," and "Sea Weed and the Goiter Problem." The Smile Lady of Ohio State School of the Air, Mrs. Alma C. Rhumschussel, teaches "Rhythmics" to pupils in twenty-nine States. Notable for enterprise is the University of Florida, which gives live alligators as prizes to honor air students. The station director at this University has been quoted as saying, "I take the attitude that every program that goes out should be so presented that it has educational value." To launch the university courses, his station sponsored the Princess Serene and her psychic answers to listeners' questions. (In her first broadcast the Princess discussed the whereabouts of a missing husband, following which thousands of questions were sent her by mail, and thus the programs were presented so that they had educational value.)

Public school curriculums in several States include radio periods, and Cleveland teaches arithmetic over the air. Municipal stations such as New York's WNYC instruct classes in shorthand, aviation, housekeeping, and Spanish. The National Advisory Council on Radio in Education, a foundation supported by Rockefeller and Carnegie endowments, surveys, holds conferences, broadcasts economics and psychology—enlightening us on Agricultural Stabilization through Cooperation, and how to Grow a Personality. Many sustaining programs are classified as educational—the New York Bar Association's digest of the fundamentals of law, the warnings of health departments against medical quackery, NBC's famous course in playwriting that included "The Tragedy of Trying to Market a Play Once You Have Written It," and courses in public speaking and government.

A good deal of this culture is aimed at adults but, adult or juvenile, education has its place in the air. Of six hundred stations, eighty-three are operated by schools, universities,

churches, municipalities, or charitable institutions Forty-nine are officially educational and are licensed to operate a total of 3700 hours a week Six minutes out of every sixty on the air are devoted to education

All of this is as nothing and apparently satisfies nobody Senators Couzens and Dill investigate, the British government monopoly system looms on the Radio Commission's horizon The educators press for more wave lengths, the broadcasters concede that listeners rebel at dismal sales falsehoods and soberly offer to place their facilities at the educators' disposal without charge The fight for the air is on, and each side shouts the same slogan Whoever wins, education wins

So it is the will of a free people, after all, that is making radio go educational, even though it is educators who force the issue, for the public, it seems, wants culture Weary of moons coming over mountains, satisfied that only God can make trees, familiar with longings to return to various States, the public now hungers for Gestalt psychology and shorthand, entomology, fractions, Parsifal, and nature talks The public begs radio for culture, say the educators The educators, fired with visions of illimitable classrooms, are willing and happy to supply it Advertisers still favor jazz and the sales talk, but the broadcasters are convinced that a change is due, that uplift now is the thing.

### III

Bearing clearly in mind these convictions and demands, and knowing all too well what radio is to-day, what may we suppose that radio education will be like five years, ten years hence? May we speculate about the educational programs of the future? It ought to be possible, for the essential outlines have been distinctly drawn, the future itself is almost upon us.

If the dreams of the radio educators are realized, classrooms and forums may fade forever In the days to follow all education may come by air Steadily the school benches empty,

more and more the children do their listening at home Mothers, at last more pal than parent, listen with the children while thirty million loudspeakers broadcast 540,000,000 hours of culture a day We shall find one receiver in every family, each receiver a combination university, opera house, world cruise, and laboratory from 6 A M to midnight No microphone in the land will emit a sound that is not cultural, no croon nor joke nor boopadoop that is not enlightening as well as entertaining

There will be plenty of joking and boopadooping, however. The new cultural process will be pleasant and tedium will be gone What an improvement over the old schooling—no gems of literature to dissect and embalm, no Plantagenets to assort, no improbable A dividing apples, no grim blackboard! For it will be discovered that the “radiot,” no matter how many questionnaires he has signed in favor of culture, will not listen long nor to big words, and cannot be forced to stay in class nor after school It is too easy to flip the dial to another station. The honor system cannot apply to the “radiot,” with no way of threatening to provide monitors to watch him Education, therefore, will have to sell itself to the listener Does such a vision seem improbable? Consider for a moment how important the art of condensation—always a prime factor in broadcasting technique—has become at the present day

Already there have been pretty feats of tabloidizing “International Trade Balances, Gold and Prosperity,” “Transient Changes in Personality,” and even “The Scale of the Solar System” have been broadcast in fifteen minutes apiece At this rate doubtless the day will soon be at hand when five minutes will be enough for Einstein, theme song and all

In dramatizing knowledge for us, the way has been shown by the American School of the Air This is no flimsy pretext at pedagogy, but an impressive institution equipped with a Dean, Dr William C Bagley, Professor of Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, with advisers such as Edwin Markham, Dr Julius Klein, George Pierce Baker, Mary Gar-

den, Daniel Beard, and the Hon Ray Lyman Wilbur, and with a complete faculty including dramatist and sound "effec-tician" To quote Dean Bagley on the "dramalogues" by means of which literature and history are presented "From the outset every effort has been made to insure their accuracy and educational adequacy A staff comprising recognized author-ities in each of the fields included in the programs has been organized and every program must pass muster at the hands of a specialist in the field that the program represents" Con-sider, for example, "Proserpine," a model of brief dramatized accuracy and adequacy presented in the literature course broadcast in 1931 by the American School (In this educational playlet, incidentally, Dean Bagley's authorities and specialists displayed a pleasing originality in nomenclature) Here is a brief excerpt from the script

*(Pluto has kidnapped Proserpine and carried her off to his dark home)*

Pluto

I told you I was a man of some importance

Dog

3 barks

Proserpine

What's that!

Pluto

That's Erubus, my watch dog, who guards the gates of the Underworld

Dog

2 barks

Proserpine

He looks very fierce!

Pluto

As gentle as a kitten Look at him wag his tail Here, sir, come here (Rumble)

In the future heyday of radio education, when the art of condensation has been fully mastered, the dog (quantly called Cerberus by the ancients) will presumably have his part cut

to one bark and no rumble Yet does not this excerpt suggest what is already happening? At last radio education has "appeal" Guided by advertising men, merchandise counsellors, slogan writers, the radio educator has battered down sales resistance He has developed a nice feeling for consumer acceptance, he no longer tries to foist on his clients the unpalatable educational messes of the past Instead he dramatizes, tabloidizes, sets to music, sweetens

As we listen to his sweetening, we begin to realize that the day may not be far off when Georgia will no longer be a pink block on the map but the setting for Huffnagle's Horehound Harmonists The repulsive person in the Arithmetic who was always stacking wood in cords will doubtless become a radiant hero in the Funny Fraction Hour, and higher mathematics may come easier when imbibed with the burnt-cork adventures of Sine and Cosine and Madame Surd Imagination sees no morsel of learning escaping the confectioner's art the Ablative Boys impart First Month Latin, and gerund becomes distinguishable from gerundive when one sings tenor and the other base

When the family reunites in the evening, the curriculum will doubtless become less academic though still profound There will be something for everyone The Vitamin Players will make health seem worth while, the Medical Melodists will explain in three-four time how to recognize appendicitis, other specialists will expatiate on What To Do Till the Psychiatrist Comes Perhaps the Swiss Wage Cutters will accompany the sobbing of Charles M Schwab, and for a nightcap, there will be a foot-stirring monograph of Some Aspects of Cnossan Ideology by the United States Marine Band

One of the beauties of the new culture is that it will descend unaware on those least expecting it Vast quantities of it will be acquired through auto-absorption, without even listening It has been said that Americans do not listen, they hear They work against a background of typewriters, telephones, flat wheels, backfires, and cut-outs They eat amid baby cries and leave the radio turned on at all times They like noise, it is a

drug, their nerves demand its stimulation, the more noise they hear, the more of it their nerves demand. And though they do not listen, what they hear—according to psychological theory—stays in the Unconscious, and the Unconscious never forgets, and thus they provide themselves with culture without knowing it. As more radios are turned on for more hours, this capacity for hearing many sounds at once will be enlarged until the least ear-minded “radiots” can play backgammon, converse, and absorb “Mighty Lak a Rose” as the background to a dramalog on sheep-dip, all at the same time.

#### IV

What may we expect, then, when radio finally and completely combines with education?

With mass production of learning stepped up so high, will Americans be mere shuffling pedants, mussy and absent-minded? On the contrary, they will be cast in the roundest mold of culture, they will be a race of Chesterfields (for broadcasters assert that already children are more courteous from having listened to the gentlemanly announcers), they will be rich in eloquence, unctuous of voice, and if an infinitive is split it will be with a broad *a*. They will be quite ready, furthermore, to solve each and every problem with which our civilization is still afflicted.

“Our unemployment problem is primarily a problem of education,” says Mr. Joy Elmer Morgan, chairman of the National Committee on Education by Radio, an educator whose conservatism is vouched for by his statement that “the right to live is one of the most fundamental rights of the individual.” “Our graft problem in city government is primarily a problem of education. The enrichment of our home life and the preservation of our national vitality against the inroads of a machine age are primarily problems of education . . . Their solution lies in a new education which will reach to the remotest parts of our country as only radio can reach.”



So everything is going to be all right, once education has its will of the ether. All will not be blessed at the same moment of course, some States may rank high in inaudiates as they do now in illiterates, and in the mountains quaint, eye-minded persons may survive for generations. But elsewhere, by and because of radio, we shall be polite, erudite, and pure, and we shall spurn graft, obey laws, have jobs, and live at home.

Admittedly fantastic, this picture of the future of radio education is painted on outlines of solid probability. Mr. Joy Elmer Morgan may be over-emphatic when he says that "as a result of radio broadcasting there will probably develop during the twentieth century either chaos or a world-order of civilization," but there are a great many educators who believe as he does. They are committed to the belief that radio is a promising educational medium, and they are determined to make education the chief end of broadcasting. They may succeed and if they do, the result may well be grotesque.

If we are to prevent such a preposterous outcome of the present agitation, we had better be prepared to acknowledge some bitter truth.

A part of this truth is that a thing can go by the name of education and still be worthless. This is hard for Americans to believe for, with the passage of time, education has become our great save-all, solve-all, cure-all. We have come to believe that it will grapple with the problems that we dare not face, make real the ideals to which we give but lip-service, it will give our sons both job and benediction, and, if we leave it money when we die, it will shrive our souls. At the name of Education every knee shall bow. We have bowed, and given to the cause of education rich grants of money and land and endowments and bequests. The total now spent on public and private education is three billion dollars a year. We have made laws that force people to go to free schools. We have shown a faith that would move mountains. And the result? There has been and is some genuine education in America—some discipline of the mind, some solid training in the practical appli-

cation of facts, in the liberal enjoyment of the arts But not enough has been worth while Much has been shoddy, worthless, and beneath contempt We have heaped so much gold on our idol that its clay feet crack We have given more money to education than it could use, and to employ the rest we have dragged in all sorts of extravagant absurdities These absurdities, in turn, have dragged in still others until we are confronted with a School of Hotel Management at Cornell University, which permits students to present for credit toward the degree of Bachelor of Science courses in "meat cutting" and "front office procedure" The University of Chicago confers a Master's degree on students who present theses on "Photographic Studies on Boiled Icing" and "A Time and Motion Comparison on Four Methods of Dishwashing" These instances are not the imaginings of a comic weekly, they are true How, then, shall we say that our picture of radio education in the future is outside the bounds of possibility? Is it any more preposterous than what has gone before? Is it any sillier than the fact that a monograph on "the origin and nature of common annoyances" was prepared by a learned educator of the University of Rochester and read before the Ninth International Congress of Psychology in 1929? After several years of labor, this eminent scholar had condensed this list of annoyances to 507, arranged on a scale from 30 to 0 "A dirty bed" is an annoyance scaled at 28, "to find hair in food I am eating" is pegged at 26, "to see a bald-headed man" gets the low score of 2 All this is education, we do not protest, however trivial it may be, because it is education. If such balderdash has already received the blessing of our supposedly academic institutions, what, in all honesty, may we not expect from education when it reaches the radio?

Lately a conviction has been growing that drivel in education is like drivel in anything—worthless There appears a suspicion that we might better educate those with intelligence and teach the others how to remain comfortably in ignorance. But the radio is here, and there is before us the awful possi-

bility that the educators may try to half-bake America all over again

Where do educators get the idea that radio is a promising educational medium? There is no proof that, except for the broadcasting of important events as they occur, radio is any better in education than phonograph records would be. Education by radio will do anything but discipline the mind, it will have to be too glib, emasculate. We have done our best to sugarcoat education already. All radio can do for education is to sugarcoat it farther and standardize it farther. It is sheer fatuousness to suppose that the public demands education by radio. People will listen to half-witted broadcasts, the sugared education already given them makes them like it. Must we sweeten it farther with more treacle and syllabub? The radio is suited for diversion and for the communication of news and speeches, not for the spewing of predigested culture.

Let the broadcasters frankly and for money improve the quality of their entertainment, forgetting dramalogs and lectures on How to Grow a Personality until their audience is content. Let the educators keep to book and blackboard and leave alligators and Smile Ladies alone. Let them rid themselves of the American conviction that nothing pleasant is noble, that dullness is profundity, and the sad ending is art. Let them remember that the Mass in B Minor was not written to teach counterpoint, nor "Oedipus" to set forth a complex. Let them educate, then, with the means we have given them, until their flocks are ready for the best that radio can bring—the music, the mirth, the poetry—whatever new it may be that radio shall have created with illimitable sound.

## On Filling an Ink-Well<sup>1</sup>

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CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

Christopher (Darlington) Morley (1890- ) is one of the most delightfully readable of the contemporary familiar essayists. Having served on the editorial staffs of various publishing houses and periodicals, he has written many volumes of light essays of a delectable flavor such as is promised in such titles as *Pipefulls* (1912), *Mince Pie* (1919), and *Plum Pudding* (1921).

THOSE who buy their ink in little stone jugs may prefer to do so because the pottle reminds them of cruiskeen lawn or ginger beer (with its wire-bound cork), but they miss a noble delight. Ink should be bought in the tall, blue glass, quart bottle (with the ingenious non-drip spout), and once every three weeks or so, when you fill your ink-well, it is your privilege to elevate the flask against the brightness of a window, and meditate (with a breath of sadness) on the joys and problems that sacred fluid holds in solution.

How blue it shines toward the light! Blue as lupin or larkspur, or cornflower—aye, and even so blue art thou, my scriven, to think how far the written page falls short of the bright ecstasy of thy dream! In the bottle, what magnificence of unpenned stuff lies cool and liquid—what fluency of essay, what fonts of song. As the bottle glints, blue as a squill or a hyacinth, blue as the meadows of Elysium or the eyes of girls loved by young poets, meseems the racing pen might almost gain upon the thoughts that are turning the bend in the road. A jolly throng, those thoughts—I can see them talking and laughing.

<sup>1</sup> From *Essays*, by Christopher Morley, copyright, 1918, 1927, by Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. Reprinted by permission.

together But when pen reaches the road's turning, the thoughts are gone far ahead their delicate figures are silhouettes against the sky

It is a sacramental matter, this filling the ink-well Is there a writer, however humble, who has not poured into his writing pot, with the ink, some wistful hopes or prayers for what may emerge from that dark source? Is there not some particular reverence due the ink-well, some form of propitiation to humbug the powers of evil and constraint that devil the journalist? Satan hovers near the ink-pot Luther solved the matter by throwing the well itself at the apparition That savours to me too much of homeopathy

But what becomes of the ink-pots of glory? The conduit from which Boswell drew, for Charles Dilly in *The Poultry*, the great river of his Johnson? The well (was it of blue china?) whence flowed "*Dream Children a Revery*"? (It was written on folio ledger sheets from the East India House—I saw the manuscript only yesterday in a room at Daylesford, Pennsylvania, where much of the richest ink of the last two centuries is lovingly laid away) The pot of chuckling fluid where Harry Fielding dipped his pen to tell the history of a certain foundling, the ink-wells of the *Café de la Source* on the Boul' Mich'—do they by any chance remember which it was that R L S used? One of the happiest tremors of my life was when I went to that café and called for a bock and writing material, just because R L S had once written letters there And the ink-well Poe used at that boarding-house in Greenwich Street, New York (April, 1844), when he wrote to his dear Muddy (his mother-in-law) to describe how he and Virginia had reached a haven of square meals That hopeful letter, so perfect now in pathos—

For breakfast we had excellent-flavoured coffee, hot and strong—not very clear and no great deal of cream—veal cutlets, elegant ham and eggs and nice bread and butter I never sat down to a more plentiful or nicer breakfast I wish you could have seen the eggs—and the great dishes

of meat Sis [his wife] is delighted, and we are both in excellent spirits She has coughed hardly any and had no night sweat She is now busy mending my pants, which I tore against a nail I went out last night and bought a skein of silk, a skein of thread, two buttons, a pair of slippers, and a tin pan for the stove The fire kept in all night We have now got four dollars and a half left To-morrow I am going to try and borrow three dollars, so that I may have a fortnight to go upon I feel in excellent spirits, and haven't drank a drop—so that I hope soon to get out of trouble

Yes, let us clear the typewriter off the table an ink-well is a sacred thing

Do you ever stop to think, when you see the grimy spattered desks of a public post-office, how many eager or puzzled human hearts have tried, in those dingy little ink-cups, to set themselves right with fortune? What blissful meetings have been appointed, what scribblings of pain and sorrow, out of those founts of common speech And the ink-wells on hotel counters—does not the public dipping place of the Bellevue Hotel, Boston, win a new dignity in my memory when I know (as I learned lately) that Rupert Brooke registered there in the spring of 1914? I remember, too, a certain pleasant vibration when, signing my name one day in the Bellevue's book, I found Miss Agnes Repplier's autograph a little above on the same page

Among our younger friends, Vachel Lindsay comes to mind as one who has done honour to the ink-well His "Apology for the Bottle Volcanic" is in his best flow of secret smiling (save an unfortunate dilution of Riley)

Sometimes I dip my pen and find the bottle full of fire,  
The salamanders flying forth I cannot but admire .  
O sad deceiving ink, as bad as liquor in its way—  
All demons of a bottle size have pranced from you to-day,  
And seized my pen for hobby-horse as witches ride a broom,

And left a trail of brimstone words and blots and gobs of  
gloom  
And yet when I an extra good [here I omit the trans-  
fusion of Riley]  
My bottle spreads a rainbow mist, and from the vapour fine  
Ten thousand troops from fairyland come riding in a line

I suppose it is the mark of a trifling mind, yet I like to hear of the little particulars that surrounded those whose pens struck sparks. It is Boswell that leads us into the habit of thought. I like to know what the author wore, how he sat, what the furniture of his desk and chamber, who cooked his meals for him, and with what appetite he approached them. "The mind soars by an effort to the grand and lofty" (so dipped Hazlitt in some favoured ink-bottle)—"it is at home in the groveling, the disagreeable, and the little."

I like to think, as I look along book shelves, that every one of these favorites was born out of an ink-well. I imagine the hopes and visions that thronged the author's mind as he filled his pot and sliced the quill. What various fruits have flowed from those ink-wells of the past for some, comfort and honour, quiet homes and plenteousness, for others, bitterness and disappointment. I have seen a copy of Poe's poems, published in 1845 by Putnam, inscribed by the author. The volume had been bought for \$2,500. Think what that would have meant to Poe himself.

Some such thoughts as these twinkled in my head as I held up the Pierian bottle against the light, admired the deep blue of it, and filled my ink-well. And then I took up my pen, which wrote

*A Grace Before Writing*

This is a sacrament, I think!

Holding the bottle toward the light,

As blue as lupin gleams the ink

May Truth be with me as I write!

That small dark cistern may afford  
Reunion with some vanished friend,—  
And with this ink I have just poured  
May none but honest words be penned!



## ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS



## Are Religious People Fooling Themselves?<sup>1</sup>

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HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878- ) is pastor of the Riverside Church, New York City, and professor of practical theology in Union Theological Seminary. He is one of the most widely read writers on religious topics to-day. Among his most popular books are *The Manhood of the Master* (1913), *The Meaning of Prayer* (1915), *The Modern Use of the Bible* (1924), *Spiritual Values and Eternal Life* (1927), and *As I See Religion* (1932).

A FRESH criticism of religion is afoot, the subtlety of which makes it difficult to counter. The gist of the contention is that religion is a comforting fantasy. Finding ourselves in a ruthless universe, so we are told, we imagine an illusory world of divine mercy and care and, thus making our existence more tolerable, we cling to the subterfuge as a sacred possession.

A wife who discovered that she had been worshipping an imaginative construct of her husband instead of seeing clearly the real nature of the man, once broke down in my presence with the cry "For all these years I have supposed myself sincerely loved, but I was only fooling myself." Many to-day entertain a similar suspicion about their relations with the universe. They have believed it to be the work of a merciful God, they have seen it unified by divine purpose and illumined by divine love, they have prayed to their God, sung songs about him, found comfort and stimulation through faith in him. Now, however, they wonder whether they are not fool-

<sup>1</sup> From *As I See Religion*, published by Harper & Brothers. Reprinted by permission.

ing themselves Is not religion the supreme example of the way mankind can enjoy an illusion?

It is time to expect this particular difficulty to arise The physical and biological sciences are causing such radical readjustments of religious thought as will leave Christianity hardly recognizable by an ancient devotee but, while badly needing hospitalization in consequence, religion has kept its banners flying The new universe of staggering distances is far less cozy a setting for the religious imagination to operate in than the old cosmology afforded, but it will take more than the new astronomy to banish God Evolution has done to death some precious myths but, while landing painfully on sensitive spots, its weapons have not reached the heel of Achilles The mathematical mechanism of natural processes has put religious thought on its mettle, but, as was pointed out long ago, hats made by machinery still fit human heads and a railroad train, mechanistic if anything is, still goes somewhere, mechanism and purpose are not antithetical, and a thoroughly mechanistic world may still be grounded in intelligence and guided by an aim

The fresh criticism of religion starts where these old difficulties leave off It asks why men so pertinaciously desire religious faith and so pugnaciously refuse to give it up It inquires why religion exhibits such infinite capacity to recuperate from apparently fatal illnesses and even to revive after its obsequies have been publicly announced This continuous ability of religion to escape from tight places, assume new forms, and settle down in strange intellectual environments must have an explanation within the nature of man himself Man thus clings to religion, the solution runs, because he needs it He needs it because the real universe is a Gargantuan physical process, which cares nothing for man or his values, knows nothing of him, and in the end will snuff him out This world of fact is so intolerable that man refuses to live in it until he has overlaid it with a world of desire Religion is thus a comforting illusion It survives, not because

it is true, but precisely because it is false, it is the world as man would like it, imaginatively superimposed on the world as it really is

To be sure, this reduction of theology to psychology is not new, more than once in the long, running fight between religion and irreligion the completely subjective nature of God has been asserted, as, for example, by Feuerbach in the last century, but to-day this old method of attack has gained fresh poignancy. When it is Freudian, it posits the experience of the babe in his mother's womb as the most comfortable epoch in the human organism's existence—an experience of such sheltering care that unconsciously the adult forever wishes to return. Religion, then, with its God of love, is a psychological wish-fulfillment, its springs from the pathetic longing of the human organism in this inexorable universe to retreat to solace and peace.

No such special formulation, however, is indispensable to the interpretation of religious faith as a consoling mirage. Whether the mechanism by which it emerges is phrased in Freudian terms or not, faith can still be charged with being an illusion. Never did religion face hostile strategy more threatening. In the most dangerous hours of ascendent disbelief, when man's faith has been assailed as irrational and obsolete, it still has been possible to marshal evidence of the serviceable effects of religion on its believers, to enlarge on the comfort it confers, the doors of hope it opens, the sense of life's significance it imparts, the stimulating faiths it furnishes, the lives it invigorates and transforms. Now, however, all this is turned against the defenders of the faith.

To be sure, says the rejoinder, religion is comforting, stimulating, encouraging. That is the reason why folk are religious. This universe seen as modern science reveals it is utterly without encouragement or comfort.

The world rolls round for ever like a mill,  
It grinds out death and life and good and ill,  
It has no purpose, heart or mind or will

In such a cosmos the naked facts are too unendurably inhuman to be sustained with equanimity or lived upon with eagerness. But human beings, fortuitously emerging on this transient planet and living, as one astronomer puts it, like sailors who run up the rigging of a sinking ship, passionately desire to be at peace and to work with enthusiasm. Therefore, they make up religion. It springs from unconscious processes of emotional reaction. It is comparable to our concealment of the uncomfortable process of gestation under the friendly figure of the stork. It is the human organism's way of looking in another direction when the truth becomes intolerable, and there seeing what he wants to see. Religion no longer needs to be disproved, it is merely a psychological process to be explained.

By this strategy of attack some of the most potent religious artillery falls into the hands of the enemy. The more we insist on the beauty and usefulness of religious faith and extol it as a way to abundant living, the worse off, apparently, we are, for the more we lend color to the contention that religion rests on subjective desire rather than on objective fact. Thus losing so large a portion of our offensive armament, we find ourselves, as well, blasted from old defensive citadels. For in the past, no matter how difficult the intellectual readjustments may have been, we could insist that though God cannot be proved he cannot be disproved, that the path of faith is open to belief in a spiritual interpretation of the world. Now, however, the vanguard of the irreligious have no interest in disproving God, they simply explain him—he is a defense-mechanism by which we make a pitiless universe seem fatherly, a subjective fog-bank, hiding cruel facts of the real world, by calling which solid ground we make life more livable.

## II

The first reaction of a religious man to this subtle and serious attack would better be frank recognition of the truth in it. Anyone acquainted with even the environs of modern

psychiatry knows that not only religious imagination but every other function of the human mind is commonly used as a means of substituting desire for reality "Anything to escape, to color the spectacles!" exclaims one of Warwick Deeping's characters The psychiatrist suspects that human life is largely lived on that basis Defense-mechanisms, rationalizations, and wish-fantasies, by which we sidestep the actual and escape into some desired fairyland, abound in the human mind Indeed, tricks of evasion and self-deceit so infest our thinking that their presence in religion is only a small portion of the total problem which they represent

"As one runs through the literature of the psychiatrist and the psychoanalyst of the day," writes Professor Gault, "one gains the impression that much of our behavior and almost every emotional reaction that one experiences is a defense" Drunkenness is a defense-mechanism by which we escape from hum-drum conditions, boasting a compensatory device by which we elude a real sense of inferiority and simulate a superior attitude, day-dreams a means of flight from a world of tiresome fact to a world of desire, hysteria a form of subconscious shirking, and a Micawberish faith that something will turn up, a familiar psychological alibi for directive thinking and hard work The most difficult task in the world for most people is courageously to deal with reality Our sanitariums are full of folk who, eluding constructive handling of their factual problems, have subconsciously betaken themselves to neurasthenia until neurasthenia has taken hold on them, and any one of us intelligently watching his own mind can catch it weaving its cunning subterfuges of escape That is to say, the charge now made against religion, that it can be used and is being used as a substitute for facing real facts, is a charge that can be made against the whole mental life of man

To be sure, religion is commonly employed as a means of retreat from disturbing facts! So are countless other things from cocaine, day-dreams, and detective stories, to music, poetry, and ordinary optimism. "Land sakes!" said one poor

woman in Middletown, "I don't see how people live at all who don't cheer themselves up by thinkin' of God and Heaven." Many people's faith is thus a practical way of finding cheer when untoward circumstances press too ruthlessly upon them. Granted that such religion is naive, not at all concerned with the philosophic truth about the universe, and taken for granted as a useful means of achieving solace in an uncomfortable world, one may say, even on this level, that, considering the various other defense-mechanisms popularly employed to cheer people up, we may be thankful that some folk still remain who reach the goal of inward joy by thinking about God.

While, however, this practical and largely unconsidered retreat upon religious faith because of its comforting effects is inevitably to be expected, intelligent exponents of religion cannot be complacent about the matter. Undoubtedly, many religious people are fooling themselves. Careless of the facts of the universe, they try by imaginative devices to wangle out of life a temporary peace of mind. They surround themselves with an impinging world of friendly saints and angels, believe what they wish to believe about the goodness of God, the spiritual significance of life, the hope of immortality, display militant impatience at any disturbance of their faiths and expectations. The impression they make on the detached observer is unfortunate. He is inclined to feel, like one young collegian, that "Religion is nothing but a chloroform mask into which the weak and unhappy stick their faces."

Obviously, such disparagement depends on an interpretation of religion in comfortable terms. No austere religion of self-renunciation would suggest this criticism. Our soft and sentimental modernism, therefore, must in this matter accept heavy responsibility, for it undoubtedly has led Christianity into the defile where this ambush could be sprung with deadliest effect. The old orthodoxy was by no means so susceptible of interpretation in terms of comfort. Men believed in a Calvinistic God who from all eternity had foredoomed multitudes of his children to eternal hell. Preachers drove women mad and made



strong men cry out in terror by their pictures of God holding sinners over the infernal pit and likely at any moment to let go. One who, like myself, has now a long memory can recall those days when fear haunted the sanctuary. When I was seven I cried myself to sleep in dread that I was going to hell and when I was nine I was ill from panic terror lest I had committed the unpardonable sin. Had the idea been broached in those days that religion is merely a psychological device by which we solace ourselves, it would have been difficult to see the point.

Against this reign of terror in religion the new theology revolted. Judgment Day was allegorized, hell was sublimated, predestination was denied, God was sentimentalized. Whatever was harsh, grim, forbidding in the old religion was crowded to the periphery or thrust out altogether, and whatever was lovely, comforting, hopeful was made central. Religion became a song about the ideal life, the love of God, the hope of heaven. Many of the older generation still remember how like the water and bread of life this new interpretation seemed. It was part and parcel of the *Zeitgeist*, it accorded with the mid-Victorian attitude, it emerged in Browning's gorgeous optimism as well as in the sentimentality of gospel hymns. Skeptics might doubt and science pose difficult problems, but we knew that in this inspiring faith of religion—a good God, a morally trustworthy universe, an onward and upward march forever—we had found the secret of triumphant living. And now the ambush breaks upon this very position. Our strategy apparently has gone awry and the very battle-line we chose has given to the irreligious the best opportunity they ever had. They grant everything we say about the loveliness and comfort of our faith, they agree that it inspires, consoles, enheartens, and pacifies, they consent to the claim that it is emotionally satisfying and often practically useful. The fact that it is all this, they say, explains its emergence. It is a fantasy constructed for this very purpose. It is man's subjective method of making himself more comfortable in an uncomfortable world.

What we face to-day, therefore, is not only the universal tendency in human nature to sugarcoat stern fact with fantasy, but this tendency accentuated by a type of religion which lends itself readily to such saccharine use. The upshot is that multitudes of religious people are unquestionably fooling themselves. The chief engineer of the Eighth Avenue Subway recently told me that he had received a letter from a woman demanding that the blasting on the subway be stopped because it interfered with the singing of her pet canary. That woman's outlook illustrates much popular religion. Her ego had pushed itself into the center of the city's life, her pet canary's singing had become to her a crucial matter of metropolitan concern, the vast enterprises of the municipality should in her opinion turn aside for her pet. A similar frame of mind characterizes egocentric religion.

To be sure, some two billion years ago this little planet broke off from its parent sun and started on its orbit of six hundred million miles. To be sure, the sun itself is but a tiny thing—millions of it could be lost in a star like Betelgeuse. To be sure, there are extra-galactic nebulae from which light speeding 186,000 miles a second has been travelling 140,000,000 years to reach us. The cosmos is a blasting operation on a titanic scale. This fact does not shut out the possibility that the Power behind the universe may ultimately be interested in personality. The Eighth Avenue Subway is concerned with personality, the welfare of persons is its object. Individual whimsies, however, do not count, pet canaries are not determinative. So our universe is a stern affair, and the God of it, as Jesus said in his parable, is like an "austere man." He has no pets, he plays no favorites, he stops no blasting for any man's canary. Law rules in this cosmos, not magic. There are no Aladdin's lamps. To forget that is to run with the egocentric multitude into a religion of illusion.

It is one thing, however, thus to grant that religious imagination, like every other mental functioning, is used to produce egotistically satisfying fantasies, it is another thing to claim

that so obvious a fact finally disposes of religion. The latter is a much more weighty proposition than can be supported by any psychoanalysis of religious wish-fulfillments.

### III

The claim that religion essentially is fantasy is just as strong or weak as the materialistic world-view with which it starts. For whether explicit or not, materialism, by whatever special name it may now be called to distinguish it from discredited predecessors, supplies these new strategists with their base of operations. They begin with a merely quantitative universe, they assume its metrical aspects to be original and creative, the cosmos, in their view, has emerged from the automatic organization of physical energy-units. With this for their beginning, their ending is inevitable: all man's qualitative life—his disinterested love of truth, beauty, and goodness—is purely subjective. In so far as his mind discovers quantitative facts, man may be knowing the outer world somewhat as it really is, but when, so we are told, man tries to externalize his æsthetic and moral life, to posit a good God, or see artistry as a structural fact in the universe, or interpret social progress in terms of cosmic purpose, he is fooling himself. Nothing outside his own psychological processes corresponds with what he experiences as creative spiritual life. Since, therefore, there is neither goodness, purpose, intelligence, artistry, nor any other spiritual quality present in the universe external to man, all religion, in so far as it inspires man with the faith that his spiritual life is a revelation of the universal life, is fallacious. On that basis alone can the claim be erected that religion is essentially a fantasy. With that for a starting point one may go on to say with a character in a modern novel, "Man invents religion to hide the full horror of the universe's complete indifference, for it is horrible."

It is necessary to insist that this new psychological attack on religion does rest back on a materialistic foundation, and

is just as steady or as shaky as its base Too frequently these new strategists are unwilling to make a frank statement of their world-view The number of thoroughgoing minds like Bertrand Russell's, saying straightly, "omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way," and drawing the legitimate conclusion that religion is, of course, subjective finery with which we clothe an inexorable world, is small Most of the humanists who elide all extrahuman elements from religion and reduce it to subjectivism discretely draw a veil of silence over their world-view

Once in a while some lucid mind, disliking clandestine dealing, states frankly what the upshot is to human life on this planet when his philosophy is granted So Mr Everett Dean Martin says "At the end of all our strivings and efforts science sees our world a frozen clod whirling through emptiness about a cheerless and exhausted sun, bearing on its sides the marks of man's once hopeful activity, fragments of his works of art mixed with glacial debris, all waiting in the dark for millenniums until the final crash comes, when even the burned out sun shall be shattered in collision with another like it, and the story shall all be over while there is no one to remember and none to care All will be as if it had never been " Obviously, in a universe where all spiritual values are thus casual, fortuitous, and transient, religion is an illusion On that basis one might even say with Goncourt that "Life is a nightmare between two nothings," and add that religion is a subterfuge for inducing sweeter dreams Most of the new strategists, however, never go through with their position to this logical conclusion but, forgetting their total world-view as best they can, like Mr Lippmann they play around with such optimisms as happen to intrigue them The fact is that when it comes to indulging in defense-mechanisms and fantasies the humanists practice it quite as commonly as the theists

One editor, for example, rather desperately trying to be a humanist, says, "We ought to push gently aside the subject of cosmology for a season, and come to ontology Not the uni-

verse, but man, is our proper study" The picture of this editor endeavoring "gently" to get the cosmos out of sight is one of the most priceless things that recent religious discussion has produced Unfortunately this method of retreat from reality, this legerdemain by which the cosmos is "gently" secreted from view is common Nevertheless, the cosmos is important

Indeed, the claim that religion is essentially a branch of pathological psychology is based upon gigantic assumptions about the cosmos For example, it accuses the religious man who believes that the world has mind behind it and in it of constructing a fantasy to please himself, and in so doing it assumes that the world does not have mind behind it or in it, but is a potpourri and salmagundi of mindless forces That is an immense assumption As a matter of fact, this universe does not seem to be a non-mental process into which we import rationality as a comforting myth The Woolworth Tower is no merely physical thing separable from mind, it is objectified thought Abstract from it its mathematics, the ideas and plans which mind injected and without which it could not be understood at all, and the remainder would not be a tower The very substance of the Woolworth Tower, the factors which make it cohere, are mental

The mind's relationship with the intelligible universe as a whole is not altogether different from this All the world of things we know lies within the apprehension of our minds The very distances between the stars exist for us in our mental measurements The realm of science, its formulations of law and its ideas of cause and effect are not directly given in our sensations of the outer world, but exist primarily in the world of thought It is just as true to say that the cosmos exists in our minds as to say that our minds exist in the cosmos So obvious is this that when Professor Jeans closes his essay, "Eos," setting forth the breath-taking marvels of modern astronomy, he describes man as an infant gazing at it all and says, "Ever the old question obtrudes itself as to whether the infant has any means of knowing that it is not dreaming all the

time The picture it sees may be merely a creation of its own mind " Personally, I doubt that, but certainly the idea that physical energy-units have merely tossed us up into existence in a chance burst of energy and that our minds are aliens here in a non-mental world, fooling themselves by thinking there is sense in it, is no adequate account of the situation The universe as we know it is thoroughly mental

Harry Elmer Barnes recently wrote, "Astronomically speaking, man is almost totally negligible," to which George Albert Coe whipped back an answer, "'Astronomically speaking, man is' the astronomer " Quite so! There is no sense in claiming that astronomy belittles man when the astronomical universe which man marvels at is alike the discovery and the construct of man's mind

These new strategists also accuse the religious man of wildly practicing fantasy when he reads the meaning of the cosmic process in terms of its highest revelation, personality That accusation involves the assumption that personality is not a revelation of anything beyond itself, that while stars, rocks, and atoms are truth-tellers about the cosmos, the most significant thing we know, self-conscious being with powers of reflective thought, creative art, developing goodness, and effective purpose, has nothing to reveal That is a gigantic assumption

As a matter of fact, personality with its creative powers, spiritual achievements, developing civilizations, alluring possibilities, is here However the world came into being, there must be somewhere the potency from which these consequences have emerged "King Lear" cannot be explained by merely analyzing the play into the arithmetical points which constitute the hooks and dashes, which in turn constitute the letters, which in turn constitute the words, which in turn constitute the sentences, which in turn constitute the drama If one tries to content oneself with such analysis, one must first by sleight of hand import into the original arithmetical points the potency of such self-motivation and self-arrangement as

will bring the Shakspearean consequence. Just this the mechanistic naturalist does. When no one is looking, he slips into the universe's energy-units the potentiality—whatever that may mean—to become Plato's brain and Christ's character. If one is really desirous of getting rid of illusion one may well start with discontent at this mental legerdemain.

Such an interpretation assumes that the whole universe, including the human mind itself, is the result of casual cosmic weathering, and that any spiritual meaning supposedly found there is our fantasy. In Canon Streeter's phrase, it pictures the universe as "one gigantic accident consequent upon an infinite succession of happy flukes." As a serious attempt to understand a process which has issued in Beethoven's symphonies, Einstein's cosmology, and the Sermon on the Mount, to mention nothing else, this seems painfully inadequate.

If the universal process is thus nothing but the self-organization of physical energy, then the cortex of the human brain must be included. That also is the result of self-organizing energy-units working in mechanistic patterns, and mental determinism is the inevitable consequence. The universal energy, arranging itself into nebulae, solar systems, plants, and animals, has at last arranged itself into the human brain, and from the bottom to the top of this cosmic process everything is pre-determined by mechanical necessity. This means that the functioning of physical cells, working in mechanistic patterns along lines of least resistance in the brain, predetermines everything we think—Freud's arguments as well as religion's answer, Voliva's idea that the earth is flat, as well as Jeans' astronomy. The mind's relation to the brain becomes, in such a case, as some have frankly said, like the shadow cast by a moving object. That is to say, all our apparent mental choices are pre-determined activities of physical energy-units—not our reasoned reply to the world but only our automatic reaction.

To say that with such a world-view religion is an illusion is to state the consequence mildly, the serious meaning of reflective thought has also disappeared into mirage.

It is the distinguished virtue of a book like Mr Joseph Krutch's *The Modern Temper*, that in it this fact is so clearly recognized and so honestly stated Mr Krutch is persuaded that religion is a comforting myth It represents the world as man would like to have it in contrast with the world as man discovers it to be It is born of desire and is clung to because, created by desire, it is more satisfactory than cruel fact Mr Krutch, that is, joins heartily in the new attack on religion But he has a thoroughgoing mind He sees that on that basis what is true of religion is true of all the intellectual and spiritual faculties of man, that scientific optimism is as unfounded as religious optimism, that not only is man "an ethical animal in a universe which contains no ethical element," but he is a philosophical animal in a universe which contains no philosophical element, that all man's finer life—art, romance, sense of honor—is as much an alien in this world as is religion and that, if the cosmos is basically physical, then through the entire range of man's mental and moral experience he faces "an intolerable disharmony between himself and the universe" This conclusion when the premises are granted seems to me logically inevitable In a merely quantitative world all qualitative life is alien, we are then in a night where all cows are black

If it be true that whatever arises in our experience by psychological processes in order that life may become more livable, is, therefore, suspect, then everything is suspect Of course, religion meets psychological needs! Of course that is why it has arisen and has so tenaciously persisted! Of course, like everything else, if religion had not aided the survival of the human organism, it long since would have disappeared At its best it does inspire, encourage, and enrich life, it enables men to transcend their environments, rise above them, be superior to them, and carry off a spiritual victory in the face of them And because of this, passing through many intellectual formulations, it still abides In this it is at one with science, love, music, art, poetry, and moral excellence This



fact alone neither credits nor discredits anything in man's experience

The great question on the answer to which all depends still remains *why* a universe in which beings have evolved who cannot live without such spiritual values? The extraordinary datum to be dealt with is that, as a matter of fact, personalities exist, finding life intolerable without philosophy, ethics, art, music, and religion. The cosmos has produced us, has forced us, if we are to survive on honorable terms, to develop such spiritual faculties, has set a livable life as a prize not to be won without the creation and maintenance of these higher powers. It must require a particular kind of cosmos to act that way. The fact of personality, with its intellectual and spiritual needs, is the most amazing with which the universe faces us, and no detailed analysis of psychological mechanisms can seriously affect its explanation, it is the total fact which waits to be understood. That out of the cosmos has come a being too significant to find contentment without spiritual interpretations of his life is the basic datum on which intelligent religion rests its case.

#### IV

The ultimate answer to this new attack, however, does not lie in the realm of intellectual discourse. The attack will continue until we popularly achieve a type of religion which does not come within its line of fire. Our real trouble is egocentric religion, which does egregiously fool its devotees. A comfortable modernism which, eliminating harsh and obsolete orthodoxies and making a few mental adjustments to scientific world-views, contents itself with a sentimentalized God and a roseate optimism will, if it continues, encourage the worst opinions of religion as a pacifying fantasy. Such a lush gospel will claim its devotees, but minds with any sinew in them turn away. Modern Christianity has grown soft, sentimental, saccharine. It has taken on pink flesh and lost strong bone. It has

become too much flute and too little trumpet. It has fallen from the stimulating altitudes of austerity and rigor, where high religion customarily has walked. In consequence it is called a mere wish-fulfillment because it acts that way. "No completely healthy intelligent person," says one of our psychologists, "who has not suffered some misfortune can ever be truly religious." That is not so much intellectual judgment as peevishness, but the writer could easily claim that he had much to be peevish about.

The only adequate answer is a kind of religion which a "completely healthy intelligent person"—if there are any such—can welcome with the consent of all his faculties. At least three elements, I think, are crucially required.

A religion in holding which a man does not fool himself must take into full account the law-abiding nature of the world. Most popular religion is not yet within sight of that goal. Just as astronomy came out of astrology and on our back streets still displays the left-overs of its ancient superstition, or as chemistry came out of alchemy and labored for centuries to throw off its old credulities, so religion came out of magic. Primitive religion was magical and primitive magic was religious. The adhesive power of magical ideas is prodigious, and millions of people in the modern world retain a magical faith. They try to use God as a short-cut to get things they want because they want them, and not at all because they have fulfilled the law-abiding conditions for getting them.

To be sure, religious men do lip-service to the reign of law. They even acclaim it and quote stock arguments by which a law-abiding world can be conceived as under the governance of God. But too seldom have they grasped in either thought or practice the basic implication of the reign of law—that nothing can be won except by fulfilling the law-abiding conditions for getting it.

Especially does this magical attitude persist in prayer. Even the plain lessons of history are lost on multitudes of pious believers. They know or ought to know the story of the

plagues that once devastated the Western world and of the prayers lifted in agonized desire and faith against them. They should know also that plagues continued their recurrent terror until sanitary conditions were fulfilled, and that even to this day wherever those conditions are neglected all the frenzied petitions of magical religion are of no avail

This is a law-abiding world in which a man may not run to God saying, "Stop your blasting for my pet canary!" It is fortunate that such is the case. A cosmos in which we received what we wanted because we wanted it without fulfilling the conditions for getting it would be a fool's world that could produce only fools. "If wishes were horses, beggars would ride."

If we desire physical results we must fulfil physical conditions, if we desire mental results we must fulfil mental conditions, if we desire spiritual results we must fulfil spiritual conditions—that simple, basic, obvious fact would revolutionize popular religion if once it were apprehended. Let the pious trust God if they will, but it is fantasy to trust him to break his own laws. All supernaturalism is illusion. Even the pre-scientific New Testament says, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," which translated into modern speech means, I suppose, "Don't fool yourself, this is a law-abiding world."

Intelligent prayer in particular is not magic, it is the inward fulfilling of spiritual conditions so that appropriate spiritual results are possible. It is the very soul of personal religion, but it is not whimsical, capricious, an affair of desperate exigency expressed in spasms of appeal. It is an inward life habitually lived in such companionship that the effective consequence follows.

A man whose religion lies thus in a spiritual life which, fulfilling spiritual conditions in a law-abiding spiritual world, achieves triumphant spiritual results, is not fooling himself.

Another element is bound to characterize a religious experience which escapes illusion—self-renunciation. The egocentric

nature of much popular religion is appalling. The perspective is all wrong. Even God becomes a matter of interest to many believers largely for what they can get out of him. They treat the Deity as a kind of universal valet to do odds and ends for them, a sort of "cosmic bellboy" for whom they push buttons, and who is expected to come running. "God for us," is the slogan of their faith, instead of, "Our lives for God."

As a result, much current religion becomes what the new attack takes it to be—an auxiliary of selfishness. The centripetal force of a selfish life, when that life becomes religious, sweeps the whole cosmos in. God himself becomes a nursemaid for our pets, and religion sinks into a comfortable faith that we shall be fondly taken care of, our wishes fulfilled, and our egocentric interests coddled. Professor Royce of Harvard used to tell his students never to look for "sugar-plums . . . in the home of the Infinite." That injunction is critically needed in contemporaneous religion. Looking for sugar-plums in the home of the Infinite is precisely what popular religion is concerned about.

All great religion, however, starts with self-renunciation and there is no great religion without it. Such faith is austere, rigorous, difficult. It promises no coddling and expects no sugar-plums. It does not use God as a *deus ex machina* which in an emergency will do our bidding, it believes in God as the source and conserver of spiritual values, and dedicates life to his service.

Strangely enough, Christianity has been and still is interpreted as the supreme example of a coddling, comfortable faith. Jesus' dominant doctrine, the sacredness of personality, given a selfish twist, leads Christians to put each his own personality into the center of the cosmos and to see the divine purposes arrange themselves in concentric circles around him. Are not the very hairs of our heads numbered? Is it not the will of our Father that not one of these little ones should perish? Is not egoism bursting into songs like "That will be glory for me" the essential nature of Christianity?

It is amazing to find this flaccid interpretation of a faith whose symbol is the austere Cross. No one would be so astonished as Jesus himself at this rendering of his religion. He did believe in the sacredness of every personality, but to that truth he gave a self-renouncing turn. To give his life for the liberation and elevation of personality, asking as little as possible for himself and expending as much as possible of himself—to Jesus that was the upshot of believing that personality is sacred.

Indeed, as one listens to these Freudians and their various allies, one wonders why, if they really wish to know what religion is, they do not go to its noblest exhibitions. Would they judge music by jazz when there is Beethoven or architecture by automobile filling stations when there is Chartres? What the Freudians call religion Jesus of Nazareth called sin. Such religion was one of his first temptations, and the dramatic narrative of his rejection of it is on record. The Tempter took him to the temple top, so runs the story, and there said to him, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and, in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." That is to say, Jesus was tempted of the devil to have a religion for comfort only. He was allured by the devil toward a religion in which angels would protect him from the consequences of broken law, and from that Satanic suggestion that he practice religion as the Freudians describe it he turned decisively away.

Follow, then, this life that so began its ministry, until it comes to its climax in Gethsemane. Jesus did not want to bear the torture of the Cross, he had seen folk crucified. His prayer, however, was not the egoistic cry of popular religion, "My will be done," but the contrary prayer of self-renunciation, "Not my will, but thine, be done." Is such religion a compensatory device to make life comfortable? Is it a fantasy by which we overlay cruel fact with pleasing fiction? Is it a

world of desire to which we escape for easy solace from a ruthless situation?

A man whose religion, conceived in the spirit of self-renunciation, is centered in God, not as a bed to sleep on but as a banner to follow, is not fooling himself

Moreover, a religious experience that is not deceitful will be one in which a man does not endeavor to escape the actual world but to transform it. To be sure, much nonsense is talked to-day about the psychological devices by which we retreat from life. The very word "escape" in modern psychiatric jargon has an undesirable significance. As a matter of fact, escapes are among the most admirable of our activities. If some of us could not retreat to nature and re-orient ourselves amid her spaces and silences we should be undone. If some of us could not escape from the hurly-burly of our mechanistic age on the magic carpets of music and poetry to live for a while in the mansions of the spirit, we should collapse. If some of us could not retreat to friendship, life would not be worth living. These are "escapes" but they reestablish us and return us to the world not less but better fitted to grapple with reality and throw it.

Suppose, then, that a man does not believe in atheism as the solution of the cosmic problem or think that this world is

a lost ironclad

Shipped with a crew of fools and mutineers  
To drift between the cold forts of the stars

Suppose that he is convinced that the cosmos is a law-abiding and progressive system, grounded in intelligence and patterned by a purpose whose deepest reality is revealed in spiritual life, shall he not retreat to that? To call that in an evil sense a defense-mechanism is to beg the question. If materialism in any of its forms is true, then, to be sure, religion is a deceptive defense-mechanism, and so are most beautiful things in human experience. But if the world really does have spiritual meaning, then such religion is one of those indispensable orientations

of the soul in its real environment which steady, strengthen, and transform our lives

Religion, however, is much more than retreat, even when retreat is elevated to its noblest terms. Comfort is a strong word—fort, fortress, fortification, fortitude, fortify are its near relatives—and a great religion always has brought and always will bring comfort. But great religion does so not by escaping from the actual world but by supplying faith and courage to transform it.

When, knowing religious biography at its best, one listens to the new strategists putting religion into the same class with drugs and day-dreams as a means of escape from life, patience becomes difficult. To be sure, cheap men have always held a cheap religion. So a Buddhist priest said to a friend of mine: "Religion is a device to bring peace of mind in the midst of conditions as they are." This attitude is not exclusively Buddhist, much contemporaneous Christianity is of the same breed. It is the ultimate heresy, hating which as a travesty on religion, one welcomes Freud and all his kind if they can make the case against it plainer and press the attack upon it more relentlessly. But to call that cheap article real religion is to forget the notable exhibitions of another kind of faith, from some ancient Moses linking his life to the fortunes of a slave people until he liberated them to some modern Grenfell forgetting himself into immortality in Labrador. Such religion is not akin to drugs and day-dreams, it means not escape from but transformation of the actual world.

It will be a sad day for the race if such religion vanishes. I see no likelihood of getting out of atheism the necessary faith and hope for social progress. That pictures the universe as a crazy book in dealing with which we may indeed be scientific, may count the letters and note the method of their arrangement but may not be religious and so read sense and meaning in the whole. The human mind will not forever avoid the logical consequences of such a world-view if it prevails.

"It cannot be doubted," one of the new psychological as-

sailants writes, "that God has been a necessity to the human race, that He is still a necessity, and will long continue to be " Indeed he will, and it is notable that even those who think him an illusion admit the fact Religion has been described as mere superstition, a left-over from the age of magic, a deliberate device of priestcraft for controlling the masses, but to-day such external descriptions are outmoded Whatever else may be true of it, religion is one of the most deep-seated responses of the human organism, part and parcel of personality's method of getting on in the world To dismiss it as a branch of pathological psychology is too cavalier a method of disposing of a profound matter

The Freudians, in this regard, are lifting their sails into a passing gust of wind Often clouded by ignorance and wandering in uncertainty, using fantasy when fact gives out and mistaking wishes for reality, religion shares the common fate of all things human, but at its heart even the skeptic must at times suspect that it is dealing with truth—"no transient brush of a fancied angel's wing," as Martineau put it, "but the abiding presence and persuasion of the Soul of Souls "



## The Cult of Unintelligibility<sup>1</sup>

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MAX EASTMAN

Max Eastman (1883- ), is an author, poet, and critic. He has edited *The Masses* and *The Liberator*, written *Child of the Amazons and Other Poems*, *Enjoyment of Poetry*, and translated many Russian books, notably *The History of the Russian Revolution* by Leon Trotsky.

Two tendencies are confused in the literary movement called modernist which ought to be distinguished. They are clearly distinguished for me, because I like one of them and the other I regard as an affliction. But many people see only one tendency here and are puzzled to define it. The tendency that I like might be called the cultivation of pure poetry. The tendency that I do not like I call the cult of unintelligibility.

If you pick up a book by Hart Crane, E. E. Cummings, James Joyce, Gertrude Stein, Edith Sitwell, or any of the "modernists," and read a page innocently, I think the first feeling you will have is that the author isn't telling you anything. It may seem that he isn't telling you anything because he doesn't know anything. Or it may seem that he knows something, but he won't tell. In any case he is uncommunicative. He is unfriendly. He seems to be playing by himself, and offering you somewhat incidentally the opportunity to look on.

All poetry, according to Mr. I. A. Richards, is an act of communication. It is that, whether the poet thinks so or not, because words are in their very nature communications. All

<sup>1</sup> From *The Literary Mind*, copyright, 1931, by Charles Scribner's Sons. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

literature, indeed, Mr Richards describes as a verbal communication of values I defer to him because he is a psychologist who teaches literature I accept his assertion that all literature is *in some degree* a communicative act, and I say that modernist literature is characterized by an increasing stinginess in the performance of this act

A dominant tendency of the advancing schools of poetry for the last twenty years has been to decrease the range, the volume, and the definiteness of communication To my mind that statement, which has a verifiable meaning, might take the place of about one-half of the misty literarous talk of the poets and the poet-critics of the modernist movement They are not "abandoning romanticism," "returning to the eighteenth-century tradition," "inaugurating a neo-classical era"—it is the height of romanticism to imagine that they are They are not "overcoming the distinction between subject-matter and form," "revolting against the tyranny of the general reader," being "primitive," being "intellectual," being "aesthetic," instituting an "artificial barbarism," or clinging to the "hard matter-of-fact skeleton of poetic logic" There is no such skeleton and no such logic What they are doing is withdrawing into themselves They are communicating to fewer people, they are communicating less, and what they communicate is less definitely determined And this is true of the whole movement, all the way from free verse to free association

Free verse decreases the definiteness of communication by introducing into the transcription of poetry a gross mark of punctuation which has no significance commonly agreed upon. Suppose that instead of this arbitrary line-division I made up a new character, a semicolon composed of two commas with the tails going opposite ways And suppose I announced that as a poet I was going to use that comma-colon wherever and whenever I wanted to, like the joker in the pack, without any agreement as to its value, either rhythmical or grammatical. It would be obvious, would it not, that the freedom I had acquired was not a freedom to communicate more to my

readers, but a freedom from the terms of communication—a freedom to play by myself? This is the principal thing accomplished by the line-division in free verse, except in a few poems where it is employed, as Blake and Whitman usually employed it, to divide the actual phrases of a chant

From free verse it was a short step to free punctuation. I mean the habit of turning loose a handful of punctuation marks like a flock of bacteria to browse all over the page, and even eat their way into the insides of apparently healthy words. Let us see an example of this from the poetry of E. E. Cummings. We have to *see* his poetry because it is composed so largely of punctuation that it cannot be heard. In fact we shall soon have to exhibit Cummings in a projection-room, for undoubtedly the next step in modernism will be to show these punctuation marks in the actual process of entering a word, and show how the nucleus of the word, its meaning, divides, and the new and more delicate meanings are formed by a process of endogastric proliferation. For the present we must content ourselves with examining the poem first in its normal condition, and then seeing how it looks when infected or impregnated with punctuation marks.

Among these red pieces of day—against which, and quite  
silently, hills made of blue and green paper, scorch-bending  
themselves, upcurve into anguish, climbing spiral, and dis-  
appear—satanic and blasé, a black goat lookingly wanders  
There is nothing left of the world, but into this nothing  
“il treno per Roma signori” jerkily rushes

That is the poem, and it might be an excellent one, if the poet would come down and tell us where he is and what he is talking about. Here is the way it looks after an attack of punctuation, and as it appears in published form

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 Satanic and blasé  
 a black goat lookingly wanders  
 There is nothing left of the world but  
 into this noth  
 ing il treno<sup>2</sup> per  
 Roma si-gnorì?  
 jerk  
 ilyr, ushes

You can see from this that punctuation is a serious disease. Moreover, it is quite possible that if you put this poetry under the microscope you would find that the commas and parentheses themselves have been attacked by still more minute grammatical organisms, and that the whole thing is simply honeycombed with punctuation.

To show the length to which a sane man will go when he sets out to be literary, let me quote the comment of Paul Rosenfeld on Cummings's use of punctuation marks:

The typographical display exists upon his pages never in the intention of picture-writing, and always for the purpose of marking the acceleration and hesitation of the rapid, capricious, and melodic line.

What would a man who was trying to be scientific say about this same question? Or rather what would he do about

<sup>2</sup> I venture to correct Mr Cummings's spelling of this word, hoping that "treno" was a typographical mistake and not a part of his lyrical inspiration.

it—for science has a way of answering questions by doing something. He would take two of the most enthusiastic admirers of this poetry—Paul Rosenfeld might be one, and E. E. Cummings another—lead them into separate sound-proof chambers and permit them to read this poem in the august presence of a sphygmograph, a machine designed to record in a white line on a black roller the actual pulsations of the “rapid, capricious, and melodic line” as it is “marked” by these signs of punctuation. Is there any reason to believe that, punctuation being what it is and human nature being what it is, the two of them would produce curves showing the same “accelerations and hesitations” at the points where these punctuation marks appear? Of course they would not. It is only necessary to mention the experiment. The critic, therefore, is not talking sense. He is talking literarious nonsense.

Science is nothing but a persistent and organized effort to talk sense. And science would tell us that these punctuation marks on the rampage do not promote accuracy of communication, but destroy it. They may have a very subtle, fine, and real value within the poet’s mind. It is a mere conspiracy of folly to pretend that they have an identic value in the mind of any reader.

From free punctuation it is an easy step to free grammar—or rather, freedom from grammar. I use this inexact expression to characterize the kind of freedom attained, in its ultimate purity, by Gertrude Stein. Let us examine a passage of Gertrudian prose.

The Hartford pigpen never supported, never confirmed food, therefore are not supported and this building will pay for that and food which confirmed it. White immortal eternal receipt for food. The war planet Mars. I have the white immortal eternal receipt.

I was looking at you, the sweet boy that does not want sweet soap. Neatness of feet does not win feet, but feet win the neatness of men. Run does not run west but west runs east. I like west strawberries best.

One can hardly deny a beauty of ingenuity to these lines. They have a fluency upon the tongue, a logical intricacy that is intriguing. But any deeper value they may have, value for the mind or the passions of a reader, will be composed of elements not objectively implied but accidentally suggested by them. No doubt anyone who dwells with idle energy upon their plausible music will find thoughts and impulses from his own life rising to employ them as symbol or pattern for a moment of thought or imaginative realization. But the impulses that rise to these lines from the reader's life will never by any chance be the same that dictated them in the life of the author. Communication is here reduced to a minimum. The values are private—as private as the emotional life of the insane. In fact the passage quoted was not from Gertrude Stein, but from the ravings of a manic-depressive cited by Kraepelin in his *Clinical Psychiatry*. Here is a passage from Gertrude Stein:

Any space is not quiet it is so likely to be shiny. Darkness very dark darkness is sectional. There is a way to see in onion and surely very surely rhubarb and a tomato, surely very surely there is that seeding.

It is essentially the same thing, except that Gertrude Stein perpetrates it voluntarily, and—to judge by the external appearance—not quite so well. It is private literature. It is intracerebral art.

Edith Sitwell says, in her *Poetry and Criticism*, that Gertrude Stein is “bringing back life to our language by what appears at first to be an anarchic process. First she breaks down the predestined groups of words, their sleepy family habits, then she rebrilliantens them, examines their texture, and builds them into new and vital shapes.” If this engaging statement means anything except what every good and vivid writer does, it means that Miss Stein is emptying words of the social element. Words are vessels of communion, she is treating them as empty vessels, polishing them and setting them in a row.

James Joyce not only polishes the words that he sets in a

row, but molds them and fires them in his own oven From free grammar he has taken a farther step to free etymology All boisterous writers have made up words, but they have made them in such a way or placed them in such a context that their meaning or value was conveyed to the reader Joyce, in his recent writing, makes up words to suit the whim-chances of a process going on only in his own brain

For if the lingo gasped between kicksheets were to be preached from the mouths of wickerchurchwardens and metaphysicians in the row and advokaatoes, allvoyous, demivoyelles, languoaths, lesbiels, dentelles, gutterhowls and furtz, where would their practice be or where the human race itself were the Pythagorean sesquipedalia of the panepistemion, grunted and gromwelled, ichabod, habakuk, opanoff, uggamyg, hapaxle, gomenon, ppppfff, over country stiles, behind slated dwellinghouses, down blind lanes, or, when all fruit fails, under some sacking left on a coarse cart?

This literary form also finds its involuntary parallel in the madhouse There too the inevitable step is taken from free grammar to free etymology That automatic "flight of ideas," the result of some pathological drying upward of the deeper associational roots of words, naturally passes over into a mere flight of syllables Indeed anyone can imitate both these symptoms by compelling himself to talk faster than he can think or feel But he cannot imitate them with the rare and various genius of James Joyce Joyce is equipped for creative etymology as few men ever were He has a curious and wide learning in languages and their ways, he has a prodigiously fine ear. You feel that he lives in a world of spoken sounds, through which he goes hearing as acutely as a dog goes smelling, that all the riches of his mind are but an ingenious complication of the neural paths from ear to tongue The goal toward which he seems to be traveling with all this equipment of genius is the creation of a language of his own—a language which might be superior poetically, as Esperanto is practically, to any of

the known tongues It might be immortal—as immortal as the steel shelves of the libraries in which it would rest But how little it would communicate, and to how few When it is not a humorous emotion—as praise God it often is—that we enjoy with Joyce in his extreme etymological adventures, what is there that we experience in common with him? A kind of elementary tongue dance, a feeling of the willingness to perform it This may be enriched a little among the devoted by prolonged hard work with a pile of dictionaries, but in the main the richer values—except the mere value of devotion—will be supplied by the reader's own mind and imagination They will be accidental and his own

For better or worse, it results from the indefiniteness of the matter communicated in these extreme kinds of freedom that only one genius can distinguish himself in each kind Gertrude Stein discovered the flight of ideas as a literary form some twenty years ago, and she has been hammering away at it, lonely and immortal, even since No one else can distinguish himself in this form, because there are no definite distinctions in it A similar thing is true of Joyce in so far as he speaks a private language, and of Cummings as the discoverer of intra-verbal punctuation They cannot be rivalled, they can only be imitated. Their glory is secure

Younger modernists ought not be discouraged by this fact, however, for there are other freedoms still to be won There is alphabetical freedom, for instance Why should the letters within a word be permitted to congregate forever in the same dull, old, conventional and sleepy groups? Why not a little spontaneity of arrangement here, and the occasional eruption of an Arabic or Chinese or Russian letter that happens to linger in the memory and chime with the whims of the poet? The Russians have a great, fat, double-squatting letter that looks like a toad sitting on his grandmother waving his arms One poet might enrich the alphabet with borrowings like this Another might abandon the alphabet altogether and make a new one more congenial to his inner life



Moreover, with all respect to the typographical genius of E. E. Cummings, he is a mere infant in the free art of punctuation. Why content oneself with meagerly redistributing a handful of tame signs, dried up, stale, dead and familiar to all Western European civilization for upwards of three thousand years? Can you wake a man up with an exclamation point that was known to his father and his grandfather and his great-grandfathers before him? Can you stop the modern breath with a colon that was a bore to Cleopatra? Let us have a little real creative activity in these fields. A little cross-breeding between plus signs and semicolons would be a good beginning. By crossing the minus sign with the colon we got the sign of division, a cross between a plus sign and a semicolon might give us something even more remarkable. That has never been tried. And why not introduce a few foreign strains here, too? Spanish question marks behave in very queer ways, too, standing on their heads in front of a question as well as jumping up and making faces behind it. All these things would help to jazz up the rapid, capricious, and melodic line. Each of them would give one more uncommunicative poet a place of distinction.

And then there is free type-setting still to be adequately exploited in English, although known long ago to the futurist poets of Italy. And there is free photo-engraving still to be imported from Russia. I have a volume given me by the Russian poet, Maiakovsky, in which a large part of the total effect is produced by a series of scrapbook designs made out of reproduced photographs and magazine half-tones. The cover design is a picture of the poet's wife, a charming girl in real life, apparently entering the first stages of an epileptic fit. On another page she appears, more tranquilly, as an insert in a menagerie. Another page shows Maiakovsky himself being shampooed by a dinosaur while engaging in a long-distance telephone conversation through an automobile horn with his cook who seems to be standing on the poop-deck of an astronomical observatory getting ready to do the family wash. If

Paul Rosenfeld thinks that E. E. Cummings's typography is not picture writing, it may be so, although the question is subtle. But here is a far more powerful poet than E. E. Cummings—the most gifted Slavic poet of his generation—and several volumes of his rhapsodical mixtures of poetry with picture writing of the most childlike type have been published by the State Printing House and sold by the tens of thousands in Soviet Russia.

Maiaakovsky's crazy-quilt photo-designs are actual illustrations of the themes of his poems. Both the themes and the illustrations are infected with unintelligibility, and I find the designs distasteful because they are inexpressive and old-fashioned. Even in progressive kindergartens the scrapbook has been replaced by picture writing of a more active and original kind. Nevertheless, in so far as these typographical experiments *are* picture writing, and overtly so, they are not so much a part of the cult of unintelligibility as an effort to escape from it. The marks in the book, having lost their clear character as signs suggesting imaginary experience to the reader, begin to be cultivated as an offering of actual experience to him. Following this road, the modernist poets might become exquisite painters of letters as the poets of ancient China were. They might give their creative attention to the mixing of inks, the selecting or inventing of textures and tints of paper, and the binding of books. They might even anoint their verses, as once the Persian poets did, with an appropriate odor—not always as in those days, you may be sure, a pleasant one. And in this manner they could revive, if they had money enough, on a small cultural island in the midst of our machine civilization, some of the charms of a past age of the world. But in so far as they are really modern, and not wealthier than is usual with poets, I do not see how they can go very far in this direction, except to abandon poetry altogether and become either painters, on the one hand, or on the other, printers and manufacturers of ink and paper. And that is, perhaps, the logical out-

come of the tendency I am describing—a tendency to ignore the terms of the act of verbal communication

I have described only the cruder manifestations of this tendency. It appears, however, in poetry that is quite sociable in the matter of verse-form and grammar and punctuation and etymology. A freedom to make unlimited use of all the foreign languages that happen to be known to the author is one of its manifestations. A freedom to make unexplicit allusions to some book or manuscript he happens to have been reading—accessible perhaps only in the Bibliothèque Nationale or the British Museum—is another. Mr. Graves and Miss Riding in their *Survey of Modernist Poetry* speak with great enthusiasm of this kind of freedom.

In a single volume of Ezra Pound's *Lustra*, they tell us, "occur literary references to Greek, Latin, Spanish, Italian, Provençale, and Chinese literature—some of these incorrectly given. Mr. Eliot, who is a more serious scholar, has references in *The Waste Land* to Greek, Latin, Spanish, Italian, French, German, and Sanskrit. The English classics quoted or referred to are not now the stock-classics to which Victorian and post-Victorian poets paid tribute, not Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Burns, but others known only to the cognoscenti—Peele, Kyd, Lyly, the less familiar Shakespeare, Webster, Marvell, Dryden, Swift, Darley, Beddoes, making the succession of English poetry wear a more varied look. The same enlargement is made with the Greek, Latin, Italian, and French poets."

The authors call this a method of "civilizing and enlarging poetry." Its actual effect is to narrow the circle of communication to a small group of specialists in a particular type of learning—by no means the most important type—and to communicate even to the members of this circle only a part of the content of the poem. Most of the "cognoscenti," as I know them, will be so tickled by the poet's assuming they know everything he is alluding to, that they will get along better than others without the more specific pleasure of finding out

what he is alluding to. Even those who do find out, will have enjoyed a cerebral exercise rather than the emotional and intellectual experience of the poem.

I use the word *cerebral*, because it is the firm conviction of the modernist poets and their admirers that they are extremely intellectual, and it is my firm conviction that they are not. They have a great deal going on inside their heads in proportion to what goes on in their organs of vital emotion, but so has a bridge player or a tired business man devoting his idle moments to cross-word puzzles. In my opinion, the admirers of modernist poetry as a distinctively *intellectual* phenomenon, may be divided into two classes. First, those who think they understand what is unintelligible because they do not know what it is to understand. They are the same people who listen in a theater to a foreign actor speaking an unknown tongue, and come home and tell us his acting was so wonderful that they understood the whole play. Second, those who do know what it is to understand, but find so little in real life to exercise their understandings upon that they develop a devout passion for conundrums, riddles, rebuses, anagrams, charades, logographs, and games of dumb-crambo and twenty questions. My own playful tastes lie very strongly in the opposite direction. Life itself as I try to live it is puzzle enough, and there is no dearth of riddles even when the talk is clear. Therefore, when the modernist critics object to Mr. Cummings's poems that they are too lucid—"they do not present the eternal difficulties that make poems immortal"—I can only bow and retire. I do not live in that world. When they object to the established punctuation of Shakespeare because it "restricts his meaning to special interpretations of special words," and say that "if we must choose one meaning, then we owe it to Shakespeare to choose one embracing as many meanings as possible, that is, the most difficult meaning," I feel that they have never touched the mind of Shakespeare. And when they describe one of the great sonnets, punctuated in a manner that they consider, on very flimsy evidence, to be Shakespeare's own, as "a furiously

dynamic cross-word puzzle which can be read in many directions at once," I feel that I am confronted with beings of a different species. It seems to be a species in which the cerebral cortex is severed from the midbrain and the rest of the vital system, and seeks the experience of life in speeding up all by itself like a racing motor.

T. S. Eliot has discovered another kind of freedom that deserves comment. It is to be found in a series of explanatory notes which he appends at the end of his poems. A similar device was adopted by Dante in his *Vita Nuova*. But Mr. Eliot's notes differ from Dante's, and from all other explanatory notes, in being almost entirely free from explanation.

Another friendly custom of the older poets has been abandoned by the modernists—the custom of giving the poem a title which tells us what it is about. The modernist titles tell us what the poem is not about, and they usually tell us that in a foreign language. Here, for example, is a poem by Edith Sitwell. Edith Sitwell is, in my opinion, the most gifted of the modernist poets—the one who is most unaffectedly expressing a genuine and inevitable poetic character—but she is also one of the most wilfully unfriendly to me, her admiring reader. She has entitled this poem "Aubade," and if you do not happen to know what "Aubade" means, that is your good luck. You will have less difficulty in finding out what her poem is about.

Jane, Jane,  
Tall as a crane,  
The morning light creaks down again  
  
Comb your cockscomb-ragged hair,  
Jane, Jane, come down the stair  
  
Each dull, blunt wooden stalactite  
Of rain creaks, hardened by the light,  
  
Sounding like an overtone  
From some lonely world unknown

But the creaking, empty light  
Will never harden into sight,  
Will never penetrate your brain  
With overtones like the blunt rain  
The light would show, if it could harden,  
Eternities of kitchen garden,  
Cockscomb flowers that none will pluck,  
And wooden flowers that 'gin to cluck  
In the kitchen you must light  
Flames as staring red and white  
As carrots or as turnips—shining  
Where the cold dawn light lies whining  
Cockscomb hair on the cold wind  
Hangs limp, turns the milk's weak mind  
Jane, Jane,  
Tall as a crane,  
The morning light creaks down again.

Perhaps you can guess what Jane is—or who she is—or whether she is, indeed, a who or a what. But will you ever feel sure that your guess is right? If not, you do not belong to the “cognoscenti,” the very intellectually élite, to whom Edith Sitwell addresses her poems. Fortunately for you, however, she has condescended to explain this particular poem to the vulgar and uncultivated.

The modernist poet's brain [she tells us] is becoming a central sense, interpreting and controlling the other five senses. His senses have become broadened and cosmopolitanized, they are no longer little islands, speaking only their own narrow language, living their sleepy life alone. When the speech of one sense is insufficient to convey his entire meaning, he uses the language of another.

After that much by way of general explanation—if you are “intellectual” enough to accept this rather confused psychol-

ogy as explanation—Miss Sitwell takes up the difficulties in her poem, phrase by phrase

*"The morning light creaks down again"* The author said "creaks," because in a very early dawn, after rain, the light has a curious uncertain quality, as though it does not run quite smoothly Also, it falls in hard cubes, squares, and triangles, which, again, give one the impression of a creaking sound, because of the association with wood *"Each dull, blunt wooden stalactite of rain creaks, hardened by the light"* In the early dawn, long raindrops are transformed by the light, until they have the light's own quality of hardness, also they have the dull and blunt and tasteless quality of wood, as they move in the wind, they seem to creak *"Sounding like an overtone from some lonely world unknown"* Though it seems to us as though we heard them sensorily, yet the sound is unheard in reality, it has the quality of an overtone from some unknown and mysterious world .

So far we are still in the dark—are we not? We have found out that the author is rather hypnotized by the idea that sights can be compared to sounds, sounds to things touched, and so forth We knew this long ago, have observed it in poetry as far back as the Rig-Veda—"the fire cries with light"—and read about it also in the text-books of psychology, where its extreme manifestations are described as "synæsthesia" But we have never seen it piled on quite so thick before We have never seen a poem in which these comparisons were coldly and deliberately and, therefore, unconvincingly perpetrated throughout twelve or fourteen stanzas by a poet seeking to exemplify what she imagines to be a new psychological discovery So far, then, her explanation has made us aware of her capabilities in bad taste, but we are still unaware of the subject of her poem But now she suddenly, and quite recklessly it seems to me, condescends to tell us what she is talking about

The poem is about a country servant, a girl on a farm, plain and neglected and unhappy, and with a sad bucolic stupidity, coming down in the dawn to light the fire

Is not that a wonderful relief? And how beautifully it is expressed! We must say one thing for the modernist poets—they all write excellent prose. When they do want to tell us something, they tell it with lucid and luminous precision.

As poets they do not want to tell us. They do not want to sacrifice, in order to tell us, any least value that their poems may have untold. The act of communication is irksome to them. It is irksome at times to us all. It is inadequate. How much *can* we communicate, indeed, by this elementary device of tongue-wagging or by making these tiny ink-wiggles on a sheet of paper? Little enough. Everyone who has composed poems knows how often he has to sacrifice a value that is both clear and dear to him, in order to communicate his poem to others. Abandon that motive, the limitation it imposes, and you will find yourself writing modernist poetry. I know this because I have tried it.

The modernist tendency may be defined, then—this first element of it—as a tendency toward privacy combined with a naïve sincerity in employing as material the instruments of social communication. In a later paper—a happier one—I am going to define the other element of modernism, the tendency toward pure poetry, and show why it is confused with this one and why it ought not to be.



## What Next?<sup>1</sup>

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HARRIET MONROE

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PROPHECY is always reckless, but therefore all the more alluring. And if one's mood is for projection rather than reminiscence, only the wise future can contradict one's errors. So we may perhaps venture an inquiry as to what is coming in this art of poetry—this persistent and imperishable art which the human race, at certain seasons, for certain periods, tries in vain to forget.

To begin with the technique, we suspect that more, rather than less, freedom of form is coming. It seems a quaint reaction that certain sages should be shouting, "Free verse is dead!" The sculptor might as well say that marble is dead, or the painter that oil colors are in their grave, bronze for the one and tempera for the other to be hereafter the only wear.

One is moved often to wonder at the narrowness of the field still generally accorded to poets as compared with the ample kingdoms reigned over by the other arts. A musical composer may choose between song, sonata, symphony, étude, rhapsody, between violin, piano, harp, drum, saxophone, jazz band or the whole grand orchestra, between soprano, contralto, tenor, bass, or combinations of these in duet, quartette, chorus.

<sup>1</sup> From Harriet Monroe, *Poets and Their Art*. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

or opera The painter, from thumb-sketch to the decoration of a palace, the sculptor, from an ivory netsuke to a granite quadriga, the architect, from a log-cabin to a state-house all these have space to dream in and the choice of a thousand modes But the poet!—his domain was rigidly bounded by the ancients, and therein must he follow appointed paths Epic, tragedy, comedy, ode, ballad, lyric these he must serve up in proper blank verse or rhyme according to established forms and measures And woe be to him if he break through hedges and try to sprint for the wilds!

No, as men release themselves from materialism and demand more and more from the arts, the arts must become more immediately responsive, their forms more fluid Poetry especially can not wear the corsets, or even the chlamys, of an elder fashion As Burton Roscoe put it in one of his newspaper articles

“Poetry is a succession of revitalizations, the introduction of novelty in an effort to escape anaemia from the odic modifications of Horace, to the invention of rhyme, to the displacement of Pope’s couplets, to the breaking of the tenuous and unwieldy alexandrine by Hugo, to its further splintering by Verlaine, to the eruption of Whitman, and to the forms of the present day

“Granted that much of the new poetry is bad, that it is unmusical, that it is graced neither by emotion nor by beauty, that it will perish in the oblivion that claims all bad stuff—and even much that is good What of it? The same is quite as true of poetry in the older established forms”

Shall we, who listen eagerly to Prokofieff, refuse to Wallace Stevens a hearing for his subtle and haunting compositions, as if with wood-wind instruments?—rhythms as heavy with tragic beauty as a bee with the honey of purple roses Shall we disdain Emanuel Carnevali’s splashing rhapsody, *The Day of Summer*, because it isn’t a sonata, nor yet a proper Miltonic ode? Shall not Vachel Lindsay play the organ, or even a jazz band, at his pleasure?—and is it for us to prescribe for him the harp

or the flute? Hadn't Amy Lowell as much right as Bach to write a fugue of tumbling rhymes and elaborate interwoven harmonies? And shall Ezra Pound, composing nocturnes and fantasias as delicate as Chopin's, be reminded that the public prefers Strauss waltzes? Should Carl Sandburg, with a modern piano under his fingers, be restricted to Mozart's spinet? May not Cloyd Head assail the Shakespearian tradition, even as Debussy assailed the Beethoven tradition, with modern tragedies as close in texture, and as mystically expressive of our innermost feeling and dream, as the Frenchman's *L'après-midi d'un Faune*? And shall Edgar Lee Masters, who, of all our modern poets, has the most epic vision—shall he be denied free symphonic range within his large horizon, because staccato poets and careful critics object to his smashing paces?

One might pursue the analogy further. Is it a violin of finest quality that H. D. plays? Is Richard Aldington's *Choric* sung from some high place to the thrilling notes of a harp? Does Carlos Williams prefer piccolo solos with whimsical twists and turns of half-humorous melody? Does H. L. Davis breathe through the wood-winds music of a mournful mysterious Brahms-like beauty? If Edna Millay sings to the lyre, and Sara Teasdale to the lute, must we be deaf to the delicately emotional lyric solos played on a reed by such younglings as Mark Turbyfill or A. Y. Winters—tunes of thistle-down texture? And shall the full poetic orchestra of the future be confined to the instruments, and the melodic methods, of Elizabeth's time, or Queen Anne's, or Victoria's, or even of all three?

Yes, we might pursue the analogy into wearisome detail, but enough has been said to present our point, which is, that the poetry of the future must have more freedom instead of less; and that, if the public is less tolerant of new methods in poetry than in music, painting or sculpture, it is because it is less educated in modern poetry than in the other modern arts—less educated and more obstinately prejudiced. When Stravinsky plays at a modern symphony concert, he confronts an

audience which has been carefully led up to his iconoclasm through years of the most expert music both classical and modern. He gets intelligent sympathy from a large proportion of that audience, and the praise or dispraise they give him is based on knowledge. But when Wallace Stevens or Cloyd Head or H. L. Davis faces a modern poetry audience, most of his readers are as full of the past as the *Quarterly Review* was in the time of Keats, as firm for long-accepted canons and sanctities.

The public, we protest, should educate itself in this art and be less cocksure in its verdicts. "To have read *Hiawatha* in the eighth grade" does not make a competent connoisseur, and one may not turn down the imagists because one can't scan them in finger-counted iambics. Poetry may be on the way toward as great variety as modern music enjoys, whether in the number, length and placing of notes (syllables) in the bar (the foot), in variety of rhythmic phrasing, in tempo—from *andante* to *scherzo*, in movement—from *staccato* to *legato*, in tone-color, timbre, and the countless other refinements which should make poetry, like music, infinitely expressive of the emotional life of our age. Music is a much younger art than poetry, yet in a few centuries it has gone far beyond poetry in the development and recording of rhythms. Music has had the two advantages of a universal language and a scientific system of putting on paper tune, pitch, rhythm, tempo, and all other details required for complete presentation, whereas poetry has been hampered by language-isolation, and by an antiquated system of metrics—a mediaeval survival in this scientific age, as empirical and misleading as astrology. Professor Patterson of Columbia is almost the first investigator to make a scientific study of speech-rhythms, and it may be reasonably hoped that such work as his will aid the poet of the future to study the past with more knowledge, to rid himself of hampering and artificial restrictions, and to discover new possibilities of beauty in his art.

Indeed, we may look forward with some confidence to a widening of its range. Poetry is likely to be recognized more generally as a vocal art, and to be used much more than formerly in connection with music and the dance, both lyrically and dramatically. In spite of postponements and disappointments, one may hope for a proud future, perhaps an almost immediate future, for the poetic drama. And this, if it comes, will bring poetry into close connection with the sister arts of color—whether in scenery, lights or costumes, and modelling—whether of sculptural or architectural forms, as well as the dance and music. It is more than probable that some poetic plays of the future will be produced with more or less static mimes, or even with puppets, for the pitiful incongruities of life, whether for tragedy or comedy, may be very appealingly suggested through such a conventionalization of the actor.

Thus there would seem to be good reason to hope for a richer period in the not distant future of poetic art in America. If much has been gained during the last ten or fifteen years, we have reached merely a new viewpoint toward wider horizons. No art is static—it must go on or retreat. The poets must make the art more necessary to the people, a more immediate and spontaneous expression of their life, their dream. A people imaginatively creative enough to invent a telephone, an airplane, to build great bridges and skyscraper towers, is full of the spirit of poetry—the poets have only to set it free.

## Some Old-Fashioned Doubts About New-Fashioned Education<sup>1</sup>

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LEBARON RUSSELL BRIGGS

LeBaron Russell Briggs (1855- ) has been connected with Harvard University for many years first as a student, then as Professor of English, Dean of the College, and Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences From 1902 until 1923, he was President of Radcliffe College

DOUBTS" is my title, not "Views", and, as this title indicates, my paper is the expression of a mood rather than of a conviction. An observer of educational methods is often bothered by doubts as to the relative value of the old educational product and of the new. The new product, the educated man of to-day, is in some measure the necessity of the time. The demands of a special calling require preparation so early and so long that the all-round man—that invaluable species which has leavened and civilized all society—bids fair to be soon as extinct as the dodo. No one denies that the rare being who, in spite of the elective principle, persists in getting a general education first and a special one later, is a man of more power than if he had been driven through a general education by some other will than his own, yet with the kindergarten at one end of our education and with the elective system at the other, we see, or seem to see, a falling off in the vigor with which men attack distasteful but useful things,—a shrinking from the old, resolute education.

The new education has made three discoveries —

<sup>1</sup> From *School, College and Character* (1901). Used by permission of, and by arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company.

1 Education should always recognize the fitness of different minds for different work

2 The process of education need not be, and should not be, forbidding

3 In earlier systems of education, natural science had not a fair place

No wonder that the new education seems to some men a proclamation of freedom. The elective system, with its branches and connections, is the natural reaction from the unintelligently rigid ignoring of mental difference in individuals. Its fundamental idea is practical, and at times inspiring. When there are so many more things worth knowing than anybody can master, to force everybody through a limited number of definite tasks before calling him educated, to make him give years to studies in which he may be a dunce, without a glimpse (except stolen glimpses) of other studies for which he may have peculiar aptitude, seems flying in the face of Providence. A classmate of mine earned (so he says) three hundred dollars in teaching a boy, who is now a distinguished physician, to spell "biscuit", and another classmate taught a boy Greek for three months, at the end of which time the boy's knowledge of that language was summed up in the words "iota scrubscript." In the first of these cases, not much may be said for forcing spelling on the pupil, in the second, not much for forcing Greek. Again, people are more interesting for being different,—for not being put through the same mill. Uneducated country people, for example, are far more interesting, far more individual, than meagerly educated city people (such as most of the salesmen in a large shop), or than semi-educated school-teachers who are graduates of some one inferior normal school. We do not want men to be alike. We cannot make them alike, why do we try? If we wish to raise cranberries and beans, and own a peat swamp and a sand hill, we give up the swamp to the berries and the hill to the beans, and make no effort to raise both things in both kinds of soil. Why not let each man do what nature says he was

made for? Why beat his head on a stone wall,—a process that cannot be good for his mind? The old plan of learning the whole Latin grammar by heart was to some minds torture. Why should the early exercise of our powers and the training of those powers to higher service be repellent or even austere? Life is hard enough without our wantonly making it harder, let us suffer our boys and girls to *enjoy* education. Again, here is the earth we live on, here are the birds and the flowers, why shut out the study of these for Greek, Latin, and Mathematics? Are the humanities human? Is mathematics either so agreeable or so useful as botany or zoology?

Every one of these questions is emancipatory, but the emancipation may be carried too far. Look, for example, at the elective system. No persons lay themselves open more recklessly to *reductio ad absurdum* than advocates of the elective system. Everybody believes in the elective system at some stage of education, the question is where to begin; yet extension after extension is advocated on general grounds of liberty (such liberty, by the way, as nobody has in active life), and propositions are brought forward which, if we accept them, give the elective system no logical end. Down it goes, through college, high school, and grammar school, till not even the alphabet can stop it.

Doubt I. Are we sure that we do not begin the elective system too early, or that we shall not soon begin it too early?

The attempt to make education less forbidding has called forth various devices, among them the method of teaching children to read without teaching them to spell, and the kindergarten is responsible for various attempts to make children believe they are playing games when they are, or should be, studying. Here, for example, is an extract from a book designed to teach children harmony, but entitled *The Story of Major C and his Relatives* —

“We will stop a moment and play a game or two of scale with these flat Majors, and then go on down to the other



families waiting for us Major F and his children play in just the same way as his next-door neighbor, Major G, and he also has one sign or mark, but instead of its being a sharp, it is a flat, and he too has one dark-haired child, which he calls B Flat You see how easy it really is to play a scale, if you only remember this rule about No Four and No Eight, which is always the same in all the Major families

"All the other Majors excepting Major C Flat live on the second floor, and all call themselves flats, so you may begin anywhere on any of these black keys and play a scale Before you leave these Majors, you must notice that Major C Flat and Major B have to enter by the same door, but when they are once inside, each has a home and family of his own

"There is a reason for this, and some day, when you are a little older, I hope that I may explain it to you

"If you will go to the piano, and play a game of scale with Major F and his children, you will probably find them jumping and frisking about like little kittens, but at a word from the Major they take their places in the same way as the other children,—all Major seconds apart, except this cuddling little No Four and No Eight, who are always minors, whether in a Sharp or Flat family."

A modern text-book on the study of language remarks that in walking out we see various kinds of birds,—sparrows, robins, hens, and what not, and that just as there are various kinds of birds, so there are various kinds of words,—nouns, verbs, adjectives I see signs of a reaction from these debilitated methods,—in particular from the method which teaches children reading without spelling, but the effect of these methods is with us still

Doubt II Are we sure that the enjoyment which we wish to put into education is sufficiently robust?

"I may teach a boy to saw wood by suggesting that we play "Education in Cuba" We may imagine ourselves a committee for supplying the island with as many teachers as pos-

sible, both men and women Oak sticks will furnish men, and pine sticks women (the softer sex), every sawing will make one more teacher, and every sawing through a knot a superintendent. This clever scheme has at least the merit of an undisguised attempt to make a hard job less disagreeable, and does not interfere with the clear understanding on the boy's part that he is sawing wood to help the family, just as Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy, when they called the four hemis Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, and talked about each continent as they went along, knew perfectly well that they were working No imaginative device, however feeble, will take away the manliness of a boy who knows that work is work, and makes play of it when he honestly can, but nothing debilitates a boy more effectively than the notion that teachers exist for his amusement, and that if education does not allure him so much the worse for education

As to natural science, I admit that it had not in the old-fashioned programmes a dignified place,—such a place as would be given to it by the Committee of Ten, yet natural science may not even now have proved its equality with classics and mathematics as a disciplinary subject for boys and girls The Committee of Ten maintained the proposition that all studies are born free and equal,—possibly with an inkling that the new studies are, so to speak, freer and more equal than the old Any one who clings to the old studies as a better foundation for training is told that his doctrine contradicts the principles of the Committee of Ten, but even this does not satisfy him, since he may not be sure of the basis for the committee's conclusions If the earth rests on an elephant, and the elephant rests on a tortoise, the tortoise is a good tortoise, but still we need to know what the tortoise rests on

Again, we are told—and if I am not mistaken, we are told by enthusiastic advocates of new methods—that the object of education is not knowledge so much as power, in Greek, for example, we no longer ask a boy to know three books of the *Iliad*, “omitting the Catalogue of the Ships,”—we ask him

to translate Homer at sight, yet modern doctrine fails to see, except in glimpses, that no better way of gaining power has yet been discovered than the overcoming of difficulties. The fear old-fashioned people have about new-fashioned education is that too much depends on whim, and that whim may be born of indolence.

Take the old system in its most monstrous form,—take learning the Latin grammar by heart before translating any Latin author, nobody now defends a practice so stupid, yet that wonderful feat of memory strengthened many a memory for other wonderful feats. The boy who has mastered Andrews and Stoddard knew the power of patient effort, the strength of drudgery well done. Through a natural reaction, memory is underrated now. Education at the time when memory is trained easiest and best must be saved from the barrenness of memory work and must be “enriched.” Even the multiplication table is threatened with banishment. We leave the strait and narrow way, and wobble all over the flowery meadows. We are held down to accuracy so little that it is next to impossible to find a youth who can copy a list of printed names without misspelling. We have boys who cannot spell, men who cannot spell, teachers who cannot spell, teachers of English who cannot spell, college professors who cannot spell and who have a mean opinion of spelling.

If there is one set of phrases more threadbare than another, it is “along the lines,” “broader lines,” “developing along these lines,” and the like; and in education I seem to hear, with wearisome iteration, that children should be taught “along the lines of least resistance.” The theory is taking at first sight, and looks eminently practical. In dealing with lifeless things, such as machinery, it is the only sensible theory,—more work done by the machine, more obstacles overcome by the contriver, but it is an extraordinarily inadequate theory for the education of man. We see parents (possibly we *are* parents) who bring up children “along the lines of least resistance”, and we know what the children are. Is it illogical to infer

that children taught at school "along the lines of least resistance" are intellectually spoiled children, flabby of mind and will? For any responsible work we want men of character,—not men who from childhood up have been personally conducted and have had their education warped to the indolence of their minds. It is necessary to treat people as individuals, but it does them a world of good sometimes to treat a great many of them together, and to let them get used to it as best they may. The first lesson of life, as Lowell reminds us, is to burn our own smoke, that is, not to inflict on outsiders our personal sorrows and petty morbidnesses, not to keep thinking of ourselves as "exceptional cases." The sons of our wealthiest citizens may be educated in either of two ways: they may be sent to school, or they may be turned over to governesses and private tutors. Any one who has observed them in college knows how much better educated those are who have gone to school,—how the very wealth which enables a parent to treat his son as in all ways exceptional and to give him the most costly and carefully adjusted education which he can devise, defeats its own end. With due allowance for the occasional boy who is so backward and so eccentric that he can do nothing in a class, I believe that nine out of ten of these pampered youths would do better at a good school than under a private tutor. The reason why they would do better, the reason why their playmates who have gone to school do better, lies largely in the ignoring of individual peculiarities,—in the very thing to prevent which they are kept out of school. If it is true that God made no two men alike, it is equally true that He sends his rain on the just and on the unjust, and rules His universe with inexorable laws. The world cannot be our intimate friend, patient with our eccentricities, smoothing our paths. We must learn this just as we learn not to pick up a live wire and not to fool with the buzz-saw. The world is full of buzz-saws, and whether we like them or not, they keep right on. Here I may cite Mr. W. S. Gilbert —

To The Terrestrial Globe  
By a Miserable Wretch

Roll on, thou ball, roll on!  
Through pathless realms of Space  
Roll on!  
What, though I'm in a sorry case?  
What, though I cannot meet my bills?  
What, though I suffer toothache's ills?  
What, though I swallow countless pills?  
Never *you* mind!  
Roll on!

Roll on, thou ball, roll on!  
Through seas of inky air  
Roll on!  
It's true I've got no shirts to wear,  
It's true my butcher's bill is due,  
It's true my prospects all look blue—  
But don't let that unsettle you!  
Never *you* mind!  
Roll on!

[It rolls on

In practical life the job has to be done, and the man must adapt himself to it or lose it, and in practical life everybody but the trained man, the man who has gained power through training, is going to have a hard time. Education should first and foremost train, and training has for its very substance the overcoming of obstacles. Furthermore, every specialty is better mastered, better understood in its relation to human life and achievement, by the man who has worked hard in other subjects. I believe that the *εργον*, or job, is the better for the *πάρερρον*, or side-job. Even now, one difference between a college and a polytechnic school is that the college provides a basis of general culture for the specialist to build on, whereas the polytechnic school aims rather to put a man into a self-supporting specialty with no "frills." There is something the same difference between a man of science and a mechanic

"In his own early youth," says Dr Martineau, as cited by the Boston *Herald*, "education was thought of use more to correct the weak side of one's nature than to develop its strong side, and so he gave double time to the studies he disliked. This he admits to have been too ascetic a rule, and yet preferable, on the whole, to the emasculate extreme of doing nothing but what one likes to do, so prevalent to-day. Power to drudge at distasteful tasks he considers the test of faculty, the price of knowledge, and the matter of duty, and that without this the stuff is in no man that will make him either the true scholar or the true Christian. At present the tendency is largely the other way. To choose none but studies agreeable and attractive from the start is what young people are more and more disposed to insist on. Virtually, the student comes to the professor with a bill of rights in his hands, and says, 'Mind, you must not be dull, or I will go to sleep, you must attract me, or I shall not get on an inch, you must rivet my attention, or my thoughts will wander.' Very well, then, if such be your mood, go to sleep, do not get on an inch, and let your attention wander, is Dr Martineau's justly contemptuous feeling at such sort of inanity. 'I warn you,' he says, 'that this enervated mood is the canker of manly thought and action.' Now there is something tonic and bracing in this attitude of rebuff to the half-weakly, half-insolent tone of so many of the young people of to-day. If you want us to be virtuous, heroic, learned, and accomplished, they practically say to the church, the school, the college, to their parents, you will have to exert yourselves. We want to gratify you, but will tolerate nothing dry, nothing hard, nothing ascetic. The duty of the preacher or of the professor is to waft us to Heaven or Parnassus on gentle zephyrs, otherwise each must endure the pain of seeing us conclude to go somewhere else."

So far what I have said is chiefly theory, but the *a priori* reasoning is supported by painful signs,—by crude specialists that one shudders to think of as educated men (learned men doubtless, but not educated men), by hundreds of students

who lack the very underpinning of education, who are so far from knowing the first lesson of training—namely, that to be happy and successful they must get interested in what they have to do, and that doing it regularly and earnestly means getting interested—so far from knowing this, that they sit in front of a book helpless to effect any useful transfer of the author's mind to theirs. Brought up to feel that the teacher must interest them, they have become so reduced that they would like, as it were, to lie in bed and have their studies sent up to them. Unwittingly the new-fashioned education encourages their indolence. I remember talking some years ago with a student who was fond of chemistry, but whose habits of work, as I saw them in another subject, were shiftless and slack. I tried to show him the necessity, even for his chemistry, of habitual accuracy in thought and expression, and at last I told him that, though the position he took might do for a genius, it would not do for ordinary men like himself and me. He replied that he had rather be anything than an ordinary man. What he is now, I do not know. Another student refused to take pains with his English because, as he said, he had been brought up among people who spoke English well "by intuition." This intuitive English is often picturesque and winning, but it is seldom capable of difficult work.

How many boys know what will best develop their minds? How many parents, even if themselves educated, can resist the combined pressure of boys and plausible new-fashioned educators? Even the youth who wants the old prescribed curriculum cannot get it, he may choose the old studies, but not the old instruction. Instruction under an elective system is aimed at the specialist. In elective mathematics, for example, the non-mathematical student who takes the study for self-discipline finds the instruction too high for him, indeed, he finds no encouragement for electing mathematics at all. The new system holds that the study should follow the bent of the mind rather than that the mind should bend itself to follow the study. As a result, prescribed work, so far as it exists under an

elective system, is regarded by many students as folly, and if difficult, as persecution. When the writing of forensics—argumentative work which involved hard thinking—was prescribed in Harvard College, no work in the college was done less honestly. Students would often defend themselves for cheating in this study because it was “really too hard for a prescribed subject.” I know I am using a two-edged argument: does it show how the new system weakens mental fibre, or how the old system encourages dishonesty? Different men will give different answers. As to forensics, we may contrast with the spirit of the students the spirit of the man who did most for the study. A trained instructor, whose peculiar interest lay elsewhere, was asked to undertake the difficult and repellent task of teaching prescribed argumentative composition. What resulted is what always results when a trained man makes up his mind to do a piece of work as well as he can,—genuine enthusiasm for the subject, and the instructor who expected to feel only a forced interest in argumentative composition has become an authority in it.

I know that often the idler bestirs himself, fired by enthusiasm in his chosen subject, and that then he sees the meaning, and even the beauty, of drudgery; but the drudgery is less easy, because he has never before learned to drudge with enthusiasm, or even with the fidelity which may in time beget enthusiasm, because he never trained his memory in childhood, when memory is trained best, because he has always, from kindergarten to college, been treated deferentially, because he has transferred the elective system from studies to life. “I see in the new system,” said a father the other day, “nothing to establish the habit of application—the most valuable habit of all.” “There is nothing,” said the teacher with whom he was talking, “unless the student gets interested in some study.” “Yes,” said the father, “he may strike something that interests him, but it seems dreadfully unscientific to leave it all to chance.”

Doubt III, related to Doubt I. Do we not see in the men



educated according to modern methods such a weakness in attacking difficulties as may indicate that we should be slow to let the secondary school march in the path of the college and the grammar school follow close behind?

Another doubt about new-fashioned education I have been glad to see expressed in recent numbers of *The Nation*. It concerns what is expected of teachers, it concerns the abnormal value set on text-books, and, I may add, the abnormal value set by some institutions on the higher degrees. We frequently hear it said of a teacher that he has taught for many years, but has "produced" nothing, and this often means that he has never written a text-book. I would not undervalue text-books as a practical result of experience in teaching, but the teacher's first business is to teach,—writing is a secondary affair, and, as a rule, the best part of a teacher's production is what he produces in the minds and in the characters of his pupils. Few of the great teachers, whether of schools or of colleges, are remembered through their text-books. It was not text-books that gave Dr. Arnold of Rugby his hold on English boys. The late Dr. Henry Coit had, we hear, marvelous insight into a boy's character, and marvelous power over every boy who was near him, but we never hear of his text-books,—if, indeed, he wrote any. Nor is it through text-books that we know Mr. Amen of Exeter and Mr. Peabody of Groton. The new education lays so much stress on writing and on investigation, and on theses as the result of investigation, and on originality in these theses, that it seems sometimes to encourage a young man in maintaining a proposition of which the sole value lies in its novelty (no one having been unwise enough to maintain it before), and in defending that proposition by a Germanized thesis,—

"*Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum*"

Such theses, I suspect, have more than once been accepted for higher degrees, yet higher degrees won through them leave

the winner farther from the best qualities of a teacher, remote from men and still more remote from boys. It was a relief the other day to hear a head-master say, "I am looking for an under-teacher. I want first a *man*, and next a man to teach." It is a relief, also, to see the marked success of several school-masters whose preparation for teaching consists first in manliness, and secondly in only a moderate amount of learning. That a teacher should know his subject is obvious; nothing, not even new-fashioned instruction in methods of teaching, will make up for ignorance of the subject itself. But the man of intelligence and self-sacrifice who bends his energy to teaching boys will soon get enough scholarship for the purpose, whereas no amount of scholarship can make up for the want of intelligence and self-sacrifice.

Doubt IV. While fitting the study to the boy, have we been unfitting the teacher for him?

Obviously the new education throws a tremendous responsibility on teachers. We see why it should, and all of us who are familiar with the inner working of a modern school or a modern college know that it does. How is it training the new generation for this responsibility? In some ways admirably. It tries to show that teaching is not a haphazard affair, but a subject for investigation and study, it tries to show how libraries should be used, and how original investigation should be conducted; but old-fashioned people doubt whether it gives due weight to the maxim that Professor Bowen used to repeat so often, "The foundation must be stronger than the superstructure." They doubt whether teachers, themselves educated "along the lines of least resistance," can stand the strain of modern teaching. As a relief from wooden teaching and wooden learning, the new education deserves all gratitude. No one is so conservative as to prefer a dull teacher to an interesting one because the dull teacher offers more obstacles to learning. In this matter, as in all other matters of education, the question is not whether we should

be altogether old-fashioned or altogether new-fashioned (we may be "alike fantastic if too new or old") the question is where the old should stop and the new begin

Doubt V In emancipation from the evils of the old system, may we not be rushing into another servitude almost or quite as dangerous as the first?

I have often used the word "training." Now what is training, and what is the peculiar characteristic of the trained mind? Training is the discipline that teaches a man to set labor above whim, to develop the less promising parts of his mind as well as the more promising, to make five talents ten and two five, to see that in his specialty he shall work better and enjoy more for knowing something outside of his specialty, to recognize the connection between present toil and future attainment, so that the hope of future attainment creates pleasure in present toil, to understand that nothing can be mastered without drudgery, and that drudgery in preparation for service is not only respectable but beautiful, to be interested in every study, no matter how forbidding, to work steadily and resolutely until, through long practice,—and, it may be, after many failures,—he is trusted to do the right thing, or something near it, mechanically, just as a trained pianist instinctively touches the right note. Training is all this and more. Why should we be content to let so many of our boys get their best discipline not from study but from athletics?

"But the new education," you say, "is in some ways more general than the old. From the start it opens to eager eyes all the beautiful world of science, little children get glimpses into subjects of which old-fashioned little children never heard." This is too true. Old-fashioned people have old-fashioned doubts about what seems to them a showy, all-round substitute for education,—a sort of bluff at general culture, such as we see when children, at great expense to their schools (the new education is almost ruinously expensive), dissipate their minds by studying a little of everything. I was delighted

to hear Professor Grandgent say not long ago, "The curse of modern education is multiplication of subjects and painless methods" I suspect that in another generation we may even overdo the "enriching" of the grammar school I do not undervalue the pleasure and the profit of what is called "a bowing acquaintance" with a variety of subjects the mistake is to accept such an acquaintance as education

The early specialization as to which I have expressed doubt is made almost necessary by the advance of learning, the shortness of life, and the leanness of pocketbooks The false general education is never necessary People call it broad, but there is a big fallacy in the word "broad" A horizontal line is no broader than a perpendicular one Just so the line of study may stretch across many subjects, and be quite as narrow as if it really penetrated one I still doubt whether we can do better for our children than, first, to drill them in a few subjects, mostly old ones, then to give them a modest general education in college, or in all but the last year or two of college, then to let them specialize as energetically as they can (but not exclusively),—and throughout to keep in their minds, not pleasure only, but the stern Lawgiver who wears the Godhead's most benignant grace

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NOTE—Dean Briggs wishes to call attention to the fact that this essay was written some thirty years ago and hence contains a few out-dated references.

## A Modern School<sup>1</sup>

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ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Abraham Flexner (1866- ) for many years was connected with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and since 1930 has been director of the Institute for Advanced Study. He is a student and critic of the modern American college. Among his best known books are *The American College*, *A Modern College*, and *Universities—American, English, German*.

AS PRESIDENT ELIOT has clearly pointed out in his paper on the "Changes Needed in American Secondary Education," traditional usage still too largely determines both the substance and the purpose of current education. A certain amount of readjustment has indeed taken place, in some respects almost frantic efforts are making to force this or that modern subject into the course of study. But traditional methods and purposes are strong enough to maintain most of the traditional curriculum and to confuse the handling of material introduced in response to the pressure of the modern spirit. It is therefore still true that the bulk of the time and energy of our children at school is devoted to formal work developed by schoolmasters without close or constant reference to present individual or social need. The subjects in question deal predominantly with words or abstractions, remote from use and experience, and they continue to be pursued by children because the race has formed the habit of pursuing them, or, more accurately, the habit of going through the form of pursuing them, rather than because they serve the

<sup>1</sup> From *A Modern College and a Modern School*, by Abraham Flexner, copyright, 1923, by Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc.

real purposes of persons living to-day Generally speaking, it may be safely affirmed that the subjects commonly taught, the time at which they are taught, the manner in which they are taught, and the amounts taught are determined by tradition, not by a fresh and untrammelled consideration of present needs

I am not forgetful of the fact that the moment a student takes fire in studying any subject, no matter how remote or abstract, it assumes a present reality for him Thus, sometimes through the personality of the teacher, sometimes through the congeniality of the subject matter, Latin and algebra become as real to some students as woodwork, Shakespeare, biology, and current events are to others It still remains true, however, that these cases are exceptional, and that most children in the elementary and high schools struggle painfully and ineffectually to bring the subject matter of their studies within a world that is real and genuine to them The best of them succeed fitfully, large numbers never succeed at all

Of the traditional curriculum pursued for formal ends, Latin and mathematics constitute the backbone They get the main stress and most time, and they give the curriculum its distinctive character Unfortunately complete statistics which would tell us how many of all the pupils who pursue these subjects master them and how many fail to master them do not exist The records of the College Entrance Examination Board, however, exhibit the results year after year for large numbers of pupils These statistics, indicating as they do the very unsatisfactory outcome of our efforts in these subjects, are fully sustained by common knowledge There is no reason to suppose that on the whole the showing would be different if all secondary school pupils were similarly examined by an impartial examining board Doubtless some of those who make a poor showing do not do themselves justice, but, on the other hand, some of those who attain the passing mark do so by means of devices that stultify rather than develop the intelligence, for in the teaching of ancient languages and formal mathematics pupils are often drilled in the mechanical

use of symbols, the meaning of which they are not enabled to penetrate. In Latin the unintelligent use of translations often defeats the purpose of the study. As far as these pupils are concerned, there is no point in inquiring whether a knowledge of Latin and mathematics is valuable, since they do not get it, and it is equally beside the mark to inquire whether the effort to obtain this knowledge constitutes a valuable discipline, since the only habits acquired are habits of slipshod work.

A word should perhaps be said at this point by way of explaining why the Germans appear to succeed where we fail. There are two reasons. In the first place, the German gymnasium makes a ruthless selection. It rejects without compunction large numbers whom we in America endeavor to educate, and on the education of this picked minority it brings to bear such pressure as we can never hope to apply—family pressure, social pressure, official pressure. Under such circumstances, success is possible with relatively small numbers, but the tide of opposition to the monopoly of the classical gymnasium and the development of modern schools with equivalent privileges show that even in Germany the traditional education has been forced to accept alternative types for different abilities and different inclinations.

But not only do American children as a class fail to gain knowledge or power through the traditional curriculum—they spend an inordinately long time in failing. The period spent in school and college before students begin professional studies is longer in the United States than in any other western country. The saving of two or three years is urgently necessary. The Modern School must therefore not only find what students can really learn, it must feel itself required to solve its problem within a given number of years—the precise number being settled in advance on social, economic, and professional grounds. Its problem may perhaps be formulated in these terms: How much education of a given type can a boy or girl get before reaching the age of, let us say, twenty, on the theory that at that age general opportunities terminate?

Before I undertake to do this, it is necessary to define education for the purpose of this sketch, and for obvious reasons this definition will be framed from a practical rather than from a philosophical point of view. All little children have certain common needs, but, beginning with adolescence, education is full of alternatives. The education planned for children who must leave school at fourteen necessarily differs in extent and thus to a degree in content from that feasible for those who can remain, say, two years longer, so as to acquire the rudiments of a vocation. Still different are the possibilities for children who have the good fortune to remain until they are eighteen or twenty, reasonably free during this lengthened period from the necessity of determining procedure by other than educational considerations. The Modern School of which we are now speaking contemplates liberal and general education in the sense last mentioned. With regard to children who expect to enjoy such opportunities, what do we moderns mean when we speak of an educated man? How do we know and recognize an educated man in the modern sense? What can he do that an uneducated man—uneducated in a modern sense—cannot do?

I suggest that, in the first place, a man educated in the modern sense has mastered the fundamental tools of knowledge: he can read and write, he can spell the words he is in the habit of using, he can express himself clearly orally or in writing, he can figure correctly and with moderate facility within the limits of practical need, he knows something about the globe upon which he lives. So far there is no difference between a man educated in the modern sense and a man educated in any other sense.

There is, however, a marked divergence at the next step. The education which we are criticizing is largely formal and traditional. If objection is made to this or that study on the ground that it is for large numbers useless or unsuitable, the answer comes that it "trains the mind" or has been valued for centuries. "Training the mind" in the sense in which the claim



is thus made for algebra or ancient languages is an unproved assumption based on the fact that most persons who possess more or less well-trained minds happen to have had to pass through the traditional training, whether that training was in all or in most instances the most effective or suitable training is a point usually ignored. A man educated in the modern sense will forego the somewhat doubtful mental discipline received from formal studies, he will be contentedly ignorant of things for learning which no better reason than tradition can be assigned. Instead, his education will be obtained from studies that serve real purposes. Its content, spirit, and aim will be realistic and genuine, not formal or traditional. Thus, the man educated in the modern sense will be trained to know, to care about, and to understand the world he lives in—both the physical world and the social world. A firm grasp of the physical world means the capacity to note and to interpret phenomena, a firm grasp of the social world means a comprehension of and sympathy with current industry, current science, and current politics. The extent to which the history and literature of the past are utilized depends, not on what we call the historic value of this or that performance or classic, but on its actual pertinency to genuine need, interest, or capacity. In any case, the object in view would be to give children the knowledge they need, and to develop in them the power to handle themselves in our own world. Neither historic nor what are called purely cultural claims would alone be regarded as compelling.

Even the progressive curricula of the present time are far from accepting the principle above formulated. For, though they include things that serve purposes, their eliminations are altogether too timid. They have occasionally dropped, occasionally curtailed, what experience shows to be either unnecessary or unsuitable. But they retain much of the traditional course of study, and present it in traditional fashion, because an overwhelming case has not—so it is judged—yet been made against it, or because a satisfactory substitute has not been

developed and accepted. If, however, the standpoint which I have urged were adopted, the curriculum would contain only what can be shown to serve a purpose. The burden of proof would be on the subject, not on those who stand ready to eliminate it. If the subject serves a purpose, it is eligible to the curriculum, otherwise not. I need not stop at this juncture to show that "serving a purpose," "useful," "genuine," "realistic," and other descriptive terms are not synonymous with "utilitarian," "materialistic," "commercial," etc., for intellectual and spiritual purposes are genuine and valid, precisely as are physical, physiological, and industrial purposes. That will become clear as we proceed.

It follows from the way in which the child is made and from the constitution and appeal of modern society that objects and phenomena will play a very prominent part in the Modern School. Conventional education, with its grammar-taught languages, its abstract mathematics, its history, etc., is premature and excessively bookish. Books and bookish things have indeed their own place and value in a modern scheme of education, as I shall in a moment point out, but the child's concrete experience cannot be abridged without serious damage to his unfolding powers. His intellectual and æsthetic capacities ought to develop on the basis of a first-hand experience, not a second-hand or bookish training. The boy who interrupts his schooling to spend a year on a ranch or in the desert not only hardens his body, but enriches his inner life with impressions that give meaning to the poems he will read, the pictures he will see, the music he will hear in later years. Schools cannot all be located in the mountains, the hills, or the open country, but the Modern School must deliberately face the problem of amplifying and enriching the child's sense experience to the end that he may not be restricted to the second-hand impressions derived from the printed page.

It is, however, clear that mere knowledge of phenomena, and mere ability to understand or to produce objects fall short of the ultimate purpose of a liberal education. Such knowledge

and such ability indubitably have, as President Eliot's paper pointed out, great value in themselves, and they imply such functioning of the senses as promises a rich fund of observation and experience. But in the end, if the Modern School is to be adequate to the needs of modern life, this concrete training must produce sheer intellectual power. Abstract thinking has perhaps never before played so important a part in life as in this materialistic and scientific world of ours—this world of railroads, automobiles, wireless telegraphy, and international relationships. Our problems involve indeed concrete data and present themselves in concrete forms, but back of the concrete details lie difficult and involved intellectual processes. Hence the realistic education we propose must eventuate in intellectual power. We must not only cultivate the child's interests, senses, and practical skill, but we must train him to interpret what he thus gets, to the end that he may not only be able to perceive and to do, but that he may be capable of hard mental work and that he may know in intellectual terms the significance of what he has perceived and done. The Modern School would prove a disappointment, unless greater intellectual power is procurable for its pupils on the basis of a realistic training than they could have procured from an education of any other type.

Aside from the simply instrumental studies—reading, writing, spelling, and figuring—the curriculum of the modern school would be built out of actual activities in four main fields which I shall designate as science, industry, æsthetics, civics. Let me sketch briefly a realistic treatment of each of these fields.

The work in science would be the central and dominating feature of the school—a departure that is sound from the standpoint of psychology and necessary from the standpoint of our main purpose. Children would begin by getting acquainted with objects—animate and inanimate, they would learn to know trees, plants, animals, hills, streams, rocks, and to care for animals and plants. At the next stage, they would

follow the life cycles of plants and animals and study the processes to be observed in inanimate things. They would also begin experimentation—physical, chemical, and biological. In the upper grades, science would gradually assume more systematic form. On the basis of abundant sense-acquired knowledge and with senses sharpened by constant use, children would be interested in problems and in the theoretic basis on which their solution depends. They will make and understand a fireless cooker, a camera, a wireless telegraph, and they will ultimately deal with phenomena and their relations in the most rigorous scientific form.

The work in science just outlined differs from what is now attempted in both its extent and the point of view. Our efforts at science teaching up to this time have been disappointing for reasons which the above outline avoids. The elementary work has been altogether too incidental, the advanced work has been prematurely abstract, besides, general conditions have been unfavorable. The high school boy who begins a systematic course of physics or chemistry without the previous training above described lacks the basis in experience which is needed to make systematic science genuinely real to him. The usual textbook in physics or chemistry plunges him at once into a world of symbols and definitions as abstract as algebra. Had an adequate realistic treatment preceded, the symbols, when he finally reached them, would be realities. The abyss between sense training and intellectual training would thus be bridged.

Of coordinate importance with the world of science is the world of industry. The child's mind is easily captured for the observation and execution of industrial and commercial processes. The industries growing out of the fundamental needs of food, clothing, and shelter, the industries, occupations, and apparatus involved in transportation and communication—all furnish practically unlimited openings for constructive experiences, for experiments, and for the study of commercial practices. Through such experiences the boy and girl obtain not only a clearer understanding of the social and industrial

foundations of life, but also opportunities for expression and achievement in terms natural to adolescence. Nor would this industrial work be simply entertaining or informing, though both entertainment and information of this kind possess in themselves high educational value. Industrial work properly developed, like the work in science, above discussed, abounds in problems, the solution of which requires thought and effort. The child thus obtains a knowledge which illuminates his every-day life and a genuine discipline involving the thoughtful application of science, mathematics, history, and other studies.

Under the word "aesthetics"—an inappropriate term, I admit—I include literature, language, art, and music—subjects in which the schools are mainly interested from the appreciative side. Perhaps in no other realm would a realistic point of view play greater havoc with established routine. The literature that schools traditionally teach is partly obsolete, partly ill-timed, rarely effective or appealing. Now for most pupils nothing is more wasteful of time or in the long run more damaging to good taste than unwilling and spasmodic attention to selections chosen because history and tradition have stamped them as meritorious or respectable, nothing more futile for them than the make-believe by which such children are forced to worship as "classics" or "standards" what in their hearts they revolt from because it is ill-adjusted to them. The historic importance or inherent greatness of a literary document furnishes the best of reasons why a mature critical student of literature or literary history should attend to it, but neither consideration is conclusive in respect to a child at school. A realistic treatment of literature would take hold of the child's normal and actual interests in romance, adventure, fact, or what not, and endeavor to develop them into as effective habits of reading as may be. Translations, adaptations, and originals in the vernacular—old and new—are all equally available. They ought to be used unconventionally and resourcefully, not in order that the child may get—what he will not

get anyway—a conspectus of literary development, not in order that he may some day be certificated as having analyzed a few outstanding literary classics, but solely in order that his real interest in books may be carried as far and as high as is for him possible, and in this effort, the methods pursued should be calculated to develop his interest and his taste, not to “train his mind” or to make of him a make-believe literary scholar. There would be less pretentiousness in the realistic than there is in the orthodox teaching of literature, but perhaps in the end the child would really know and care about some of the living masterpieces of the past, and in any event there might exist some connection between the school’s teaching and the child’s spontaneous out-of-school reading.

Of the part to be played by art and music I am not qualified to speak. I do not even know to what extent their teaching has been thought of from this point of view. I venture to submit, however, that the problem presented by them may not differ in principle from the problem presented by literature. Literature is to be taught in the Modern School primarily for the purpose of developing taste, interest, and appreciation, not for the purpose of producing persons who make literature or who know somewhat of its history, we hope to train persons, not to write poems or to discuss their historic place, but to care vitally for poetry—though not perhaps without a suspicion that this is the surest way of liberating creative talent. The Modern School would, in the same way, endeavor to develop a spontaneous, discriminating, and genuine artistic interest and appreciation—rather than to fashion makers of music and art. It would take hold of the child where he is and endeavor to develop and to refine his taste, it would not begin with “classics” nor would it necessarily end with them. By way of showing, however, that a real curriculum is not synonymous with an easy curriculum, I may say that, if, as one factor in appreciation, it should be decided that all children should at least endeavor to learn, say, some form of instrumental music, the fact that there are certain advantages to

be gained from an early start must decide the "when" and the "how," regardless of the child's inclination or disinclination. It is none the less true, however, that the child's interests and capacities are in general so fundamental and so significant that the question here raised is not often presented. Most of what a child should do coincides with its own preference, or with a preference very readily elicited. But preference or lack of preference on the child's part is not the sole or final consideration.

The study of foreign languages must be considered in this connection. The case of Latin and Greek will be taken up later, German, French, perhaps other languages are now in question. Languages have no value in themselves, they exist for the purpose of communicating ideas and abbreviating our thought and action processes. If studied, they are valuable only in so far as they are practically mastered—not otherwise, so at least the Modern School holds. From this standpoint, for purposes of travel, trade, study, and enjoyment, educated men who do not know French and German usually come to regret it keenly. When they endeavor during mature life to acquire a foreign tongue, they find the task inordinately difficult and the results too often extremely disappointing. It happens, however, that practical mastery of foreign languages can be attained early in life with comparative ease. A school trying to produce a resourceful modern type of educated man and woman would therefore provide practical training in one or more modern languages.

The fourth main division which I have called civics, includes history, institutions, and current happenings. Much has been written, little done, toward the effective modernization of historical and social studies, so that, though new views of historical values prevail in theory, the schools go on teaching the sort of history they have always taught and in pretty much the same way. "Should a student of the past," writes Professor James Harvey Robinson, "be asked what he re-

garded as the most original and far-reaching discovery of modern times, he might reply with some assurance that it is our growing realization of the fundamental importance and absorbing interest of common men and common things”<sup>2</sup> Now the conventional treatment of history is political. Meanwhile, as Professor Robinson goes on to say, “It is clear that our interests are changing, and consequently the kind of questions that we ask the past to answer. Our most recent manuals venture to leave out some of the traditional facts least appropriate for an elementary review of the past and endeavor to bring their narrative into relation, here and there, with modern needs and demands. But I think that this process of eliminating the old and substituting the new might be carried much farther, that our best manuals are still crowded with facts that are not worth while bringing to the attention of our boys and girls and that they still omit in large measure those things that are best worth telling”<sup>3</sup> If this be true, as it appears to be, the realistic approach may make as much difference in history as in literature.

The subject of mathematics offers peculiar difficulty. Perhaps nowhere else is waste through failure so great. Moreover, even when a certain degree of success is attained it happens often that it is quite unintelligent, children mechanically carry out certain operations in algebra, guided by arbitrary signs and models, or they learn *memoriter* a series of propositions in geometry. The hollowness of both performances is evident the moment a mathematical problem takes a slightly unfamiliar turn. The child’s helplessness exhibits his striking lack of both mathematical knowledge and “mental discipline.” It cannot be that this training through failure is really valuable. Finally, a point might even be made on the ground that algebra and geometry as traditionally taught are mainly deductive exercises, whereas practical living involves the constant interplay of observation, induction, and deduction. The arti-

<sup>2</sup> *The New History* (N. Y. 1913), p. 132.

<sup>3</sup> *The New History*, 137.



ficiency of conventional mathematics therefore raises a suspicion as to its value—even were the subjects mastered.

The truth is that the position of both algebra and geometry in their current form is historical. Now, let us suppose the realistic standard applied—what sort of mathematics would be taught, how much and when? “Mental discipline” as a formal object is not a “realistic” argument, since, as has already been said, it is an unproved assumption. At any rate, it is for those who believe in it to demonstrate how much good it does most children to make a failure in conventional algebra and geometry. Is the elaborate study of mathematical and spatial relations through algebra and geometry a valid undertaking for its own sake? If so, neither the disinclination of the child nor the difficulty of the achievement is a reason for abandoning it. Disinclination and difficulty in that case simply put a problem up to the teachers of the subject, it is for them to find ways of triumphing over both. If, however, these studies do not serve a legitimate and genuine purpose, then the mathematical curriculum must undergo a radical reorganization for the purpose of treating algebra and geometry from the standpoint of the other subjects and other activities which they serve. They would be taught in such form, in such amounts, and at such times as would thus be required. Geometry might be decreased in amount by something like two-thirds or three-fourths and the form of the remaining fourth would be considerably modified, and new types of mathematical instruction and interest might come into general use. It is interesting to observe that doubt as to the soundness and value of our mathematical instruction has recently become so serious that the Association of Teachers of Mathematics in New England has suggested “a one-year course in elementary algebra and geometry of a concrete sort, designed so far as possible to test the pupil’s qualifications for future mathematical study”<sup>4</sup> and Doctor Snedden has raised the question

<sup>4</sup> *Preliminary Report on Status of Mathematics in Secondary Schools*, December, 1914, p. 11

as to why girls in high schools or as candidates for college should be required to present algebra, he has also urged that a knowledge of algebra is of no importance to men following law, medicine, journalism, or theology<sup>5</sup> Professor Breslich, of Chicago, has been attacking the same problem vigorously from a not unrelated point of view<sup>6</sup> Without considering any point settled, it is clear that a Modern School which wiped the slate of mathematics and then subsequently wrote upon it only what was found to serve the real needs of quantitative thought and action might evolve a curriculum in mathematics that we should not recognize<sup>7</sup>

For convenience' sake, the four large fields of activity have been separately discussed But it must be pointed out that the failure of the traditional school to make cross-connections is an additional unreality The traditional school teaches composition in the English classes, quantitative work, in the mathematics classes, history, literature, and so on, each in its own division Efforts are indeed making to overcome this separateness, but they have gone only a little way The Modern School would from the first undertake the cultivation of contacts and cross-connections Every exercise would be a spelling lesson, science, industry, and mathematics would be inseparable, science, industry, history, civics, literature, and geography would to some extent utilize the same material These suggestions are in themselves not new and not wholly untried What is lacking is a consistent, thoroughgoing, and fearless embodiment For even the teachers who believe in modern education are so situated that either they cannot act, or they act under limitations that hamper effective effort

In speaking of the course of study, I have dwelt wholly on content Unquestionably, however, a curriculum revolutionized in content will be presented by methods altered to suit

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, p 4

<sup>6</sup> *First Year Mathematics* (Chicago, 1906), Author's Preface

<sup>7</sup> Since this essay was written, the Mathematical Association of America has undertaken a constructive attack upon this problem.

the spirit and aim of the instruction For children will not be taught merely in order that they may know or be able to do certain things that they do not know and cannot now do, but material will be presented to them in ways that promote their proper development and growth—individually and socially For education is not only a matter of what people can do, but also of what they are

In the preceding sketch I have made no distinction between the sexes It is just as important for a girl as it is for a boy to be interested in the phenomenal world, to know how to observe, to infer, and to reason, to understand industrial, social, and political developments, to read good books and to finish school by the age of twenty Differentiation at one point or another may be suggested by experience In any event, the Modern School, with its strongly realistic emphasis, will undoubtedly not overlook woman's domestic rôle and family function

This necessarily brief and untechnical sketch will perhaps become more definite if I look at the curriculum from the standpoint of omissions Let us restate our guiding thesis modern education will include nothing simply because tradition recommends it or because its inutility has not been conclusively established It proceeds in precisely the opposite way *it includes nothing for which an affirmative case cannot now be made out* As has already been intimated, this method of approach would probably result in greatly reducing the time allowed to mathematics, and in decidedly changing the form of what is still retained If, for example, only so much arithmetic is taught as people actually have occasion to use, the subject will shrink to modest proportions, and if this reduced amount is taught so as to serve real purposes, the teachers of science, industry, and domestic economy will do much of it incidentally The same policy may be employed in dealing with algebra and geometry What is taught, when it is taught, and how it is taught will in that event depend

altogether on what is needed, when it is needed, and the form in which it is needed

Precisely the same line of reasoning would be applied to English, history, and literature. For example, There has been a heated discussion for years on the subject of formal grammar, which has been defended, first, on the ground that it furnishes a valuable mental discipline, second, on the ground that it assists the correct use of language. It is passing strange how many ill-disciplined minds there are among those who have spent years being mentally disciplined now in this subject, now in that. The Modern School would not hesitate to take the risk to mental discipline involved in dropping the study of formal grammar. It would, tentatively, at least, also risk the consequences to correct speech involved in the same step. For such evidence as we possess points to the futility of formal grammar as an aid to correct speaking and writing. The study would be introduced later, only if a real need for it were felt—and only in such amounts and for such periods as this need clearly required.

In respect to history and literature, a Modern School would have the courage not to go through the form of teaching useless historic facts just because previous generations of children have learned and forgotten them, and also the courage not to read obsolete and uncongenial classics, simply because tradition has made this sort of an acquaintance a kind of good form. We might thus produce a generation in large part as ignorant of the name of the Licinian laws as we who have studied them are ignorant of their contents and significance, a generation that did not at school analyze Milton's "Lycidas" or Burke's speech as we did, who then and there vowed lifelong hostility to both. But might there not be an offset if the generation in question really cared about the history and politics of, say, modern England or New York City, and read for sheer joy at one time or another and quite regardless of chronological order, Homer, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Walter Scott, Stevenson, Kipling, and Masfield? Neither Latin nor

Greek would be contained in the curriculum of the Modern School—not, of course, because their literatures are less important than they are reputed to be, but because their present position in the curriculum rests upon tradition and assumption. For most pupils a positive case can be made out for neither. The literary argument fails, because stumbling and blundering through a few patches of Latin classics do not establish a contact with Latin literature. Nor does present-day teaching result in a practical mastery of Latin useful for other purposes. Mature students who studied Latin through the high school, and perhaps to some extent in college, find it as a rule difficult or impossible to understand a Latin document encountered in, say, a course in history. If practical mastery is desired, more Latin can be learned in enormously less time by postponing the study until the student needs the language or wants it. At that stage he can learn more Latin in a few months than he would have succeeded in acquiring through four or five years of reluctant effort in youth. Nor can the study be generally recommended on the ground that a knowledge of Latin is essential in securing a vigorous or graceful use of the mother tongue, for this is again unsubstantiated opinion, rejected even by men like Viscount Bryce who prize highly the thorough study of the classics by a minority.<sup>8</sup> Finally, the disciplinary argument fails, because mental discipline is not a real purpose, moreover, it would for many students constitute an argument against rather than for the study of Latin. Instead of getting orderly training by solving difficulties in Latin translation or composition, these pupils guess, fumble, receive surreptitious assistance or accept on faith the injunctions of teacher and grammar. The only discipline that such students get from their classical studies is a discipline in doing things as they should not be done.

Perhaps an additional word should be added to explain

<sup>8</sup> "Let us also discard some weak arguments our predecessors have used, such as that no one can write a good English style without knowing Latin." "The Value of Classics," p. 4

further why, if compulsory Latin is to be dropped because it is ineffectively taught, French and English and science, also ineffectively taught, are to be retained and greatly elaborated. The reason is not far to seek. An objective analysis of the existing social situation discovers, as far as I can see, no need of compulsory instruction in the elements of Latin. Latin is in this respect in the same position as Greek—a fact more and more generally recognized by the colleges in making Latin, like Greek, optional for admission. In addition, despite centuries of experience and prestige, compulsory Latin instruction does not even achieve its immediate object. Surely we have here two irrefutable arguments for interference: (1) the mere rudiments of the subject bear no vital relation to life, (2) even *they* are not generally learned. Why should they then be longer enforced upon the unsuccessful and unwilling? There is no reason to believe that for pupils in general the subject can be rehabilitated. Meanwhile, once more, let me repeat that this argument has no force against such mastery of the classics as Lord Bryce and Mr. Gilbert Murray advocate and exemplify, nor does it seek to question the value of a knowledge of what is really vital in classical history, art, and literature, access to which is not, as a matter of fact, dependent on the study of the elements of the language.

The same statements can be made in regard to conventional mathematics. It bears no relation to life, its place in the curriculum is traditional, it is unsuccessfully taught. Of course, it must go. On the other hand, an objective study of existing facts shows a definite need in every direction of training in quantitative thinking of a vitalized type. Mathematics of a kind and in amounts to be determined will therefore, as I see it, continue to be found in the secondary curriculum. Meanwhile, students eager to develop as mathematical specialists will in the future as in the past range as they please.

The fact is that the classics and formal mathematics have declined in relative importance, as science, history, and modern

languages have gained both practically and culturally.<sup>9</sup> Failure to teach English, history, or science does not now relieve us of the responsibility of teaching them generally, because any analysis of life shows that we all need them. We have not taught them with success, partly because there has been too little time and emphasis, partly because the methods of teaching have been too largely taken over from the methods developed in teaching the formal and traditional subjects, partly for lack of a trained and competent personnel. But whatever the causes, we need these subjects, culturally and practically, they are imbedded in the very conditions of current living. Failure is thus only a challenge to more resourceful and determined effort, for the thing must be done, and on a large scale. It is not indeed educationally the only thing that must be done, but it is perhaps the most urgent. How well it can be done on the large scale upon which we have embarked remains to be ascertained through experience. Between the modern subjects (English, history, literature, vitalized mathematics, and science) on the one hand, and Greek, Latin, and formal mathematics on the other, there is also this important difference in the very act of living we build out and develop the modern subjects. They are needed, they are used, thus experience tends to develop them quantitatively and qualitatively, beyond the stage at which we leave them at school—just as it does in the case of spelling, composition and arithmetic. Contrariwise, Latin, Greek, and formal mathematics tend to shrink. Their state grows worse, not better, with the passage of time. Only the very small number who make a profession of them, or, like Lord Bryce, a hobby, improve and develop them beyond the

<sup>9</sup> Since the above was written, Mr. Graham Wallas's "Our Social Heritage" (Yale University Press, 1921) has appeared. Speaking of higher education in England, Mr. Wallas says, p. 46: "It was never more than a very small fraction even of exceptionally able young Englishmen who were able to benefit by that renaissance" (viz., in the eighteen twenties and thirties under the leadership of Thomas Arnold and others), "and the need for other kinds of knowledge than Latin and Greek, language and literature and pure mathematics is now so urgent that both 'Greats' and the mathematic Tripos are rapidly shrinking for want of candidates" [Italics mine].

school stage. Inefficient teaching of modern subjects may therefore be in a degree redeemed by subsequent experience, inefficient teaching of the traditional subjects is far less apt to be compensated. Taught with equal inefficiency, the individual, twenty years later, is likely to make a better showing on the modern than on the traditional side, he is likely to have profited more by inefficient teaching in the modern than in the traditional subjects . . .



## Prohibition Ten Years After<sup>1</sup>

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FABIAN FRANKLIN

Fabian Franklin (1853- ) has been at different times professor of mathematics at Johns Hopkins University and editor of newspapers in Baltimore and New York City. He is the author of many articles and books on public questions, among others, *Plain Talks on Economics* (1924), *The A B C of Prohibition* (1927), and *Nuggets from the Wickersham Report* (1931).

MR HOOVER made a happy choice of words when he characterized the prohibition régime established by the Eighteenth Amendment as "an experiment noble in motive." The characterization is cautious and incomplete, but of course Mr Hoover was fully aware of that. It says nothing either about the theoretical soundness or the practical wisdom of the Eighteenth Amendment, but what it does say must in a sense be conceded by fair-minded opponents of national prohibition.

For, whatever other elements there may be in the case, there was at the heart of the prohibition movement in our country a noble motive. Had it not been for the nobility of the motive which inspired a comparatively small group of ardent prohibitionists, not all the arts of the Anti-Saloon League, nor all the money at its disposal, could have availed to bring about this amazing departure from the traditions of our republic, this almost incredible violation of the cardinal principles of law and government.

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Ten years have now passed since the experiment was ushered in, and the close of this period has been marked by controversy, nation-wide in scope and almost unparalleled in intensity, as to the merits of the experiment as they appear at the end of the ten years' trial. There is, however, one aspect of the situation which has received little or no attention, and yet it seems to me to deserve more attention than almost any other.

When the Eighteenth Amendment was adopted, it was not looked upon as an experiment at all, it was regarded as a finality. Now that we *have* come to look upon it as an experiment, the first question that should present itself to our minds is this: If, before we had committed ourselves to the apparently irrevocable step of putting bone-dry prohibition into the Constitution of the United States, we had been permitted to see what we now see, to know what we now know, would the Eighteenth Amendment have been adopted? And I think there need be little hesitation in saying that it would not.

For, in the first place, the mere recognition that the thing proposed was experimental would itself, unless we had thrown all political judgment to the winds, have been an almost fatal bar. Experiments have no place in such an instrument as the Constitution of the United States.

It is true that in some sense the income-tax amendment was an experiment, and likewise the woman-suffrage amendment, but not in the sense in which the prohibition amendment was an experiment. For the income-tax amendment and the woman-suffrage amendment were normal and legitimate parts of a constitution, since, once adopted, they were sure to be accepted by the nation as a conclusive settlement of the questions with which they dealt. As for the prohibition amendment, there were, indeed, a few solemn warnings of the resistance which it would arouse and the demoralizing consequences which were bound to ensue upon its enactment, but these warnings were as the voice of one crying in the wilderness. And nobody then

knew, though it is now abundantly clear, that, while the voices raised in opposition were few, the silent multitude who were opposed to national prohibition numbered so many millions as to constitute a large proportion—perhaps a little less than half, perhaps a little more than half—of our entire population

From that day to this the voice of protest has been almost steadily rising, until now the whole air is filled with it. We are witnessing the spectacle of tens of millions of the American people subjected to a rule which they hate—a rule affecting the conduct of their daily lives, and fastened upon them by a provision of the Constitution which its sponsors defiantly declare to be irrevocable. There is no sign that this state of things will subside, on the contrary, there is every sign that year by year it will breed more dissension, more bitterness, more resistance. So contrary is this to the very concept of the organic law of a free people that, if it had been known in advance, no man or woman who understands the basic principles of law and government could possibly have given his or her sanction to such an adventure.

## II

I have put this consideration first of all, because I regard it as the most fundamental, yet I fear that it is not the one which will most appeal to the imagination of the average reader. Other considerations, however, which, if less fundamental, are more dramatic and spectacular, exist in abundance.

When we entered upon this experiment—if that can be called “an experiment” which is intentionally put beyond the reach of improvement or abandonment—certain things were placed conspicuously before the public as sure to result from its adoption. Of these the most familiar was that prohibition would in a large measure rid the country of crime.

What would the people who were so strongly influenced by

this consideration have said if they could have seen a picture of the crime situation to-day? Never in the history of the country has the problem of crime loomed so large in the public mind or in the minds of statesmen and publicists. The prisons, both national and state, instead of being half emptied, as the prohibitionists had prophesied and promised, are overcrowded as never before. Nor is it possible to break the force of this showing by attributing it to some strange and unexpected development of post-war psychology, for we hear nothing of the kind in England or France or Germany, all of which countries were subjected by the World War to infinitely greater upheaval.

England's crime situation presents a startling contrast to that of the United States. At the International Prison Conference in 1925 Sir William Joynson Hicks, then Home Secretary, presented an elaborate statement of prison conditions in that country. The facts which he stated are quite beyond the reach of challenge, and never have been challenged, astonishing as is the record of improvement which they showed. In the fifty years from 1875 to 1925 the number of prisons in England and Wales has been reduced by just about one-half, and the number of prisoners has been reduced in the same proportion—this in spite of the increase of population. That this wonderful improvement has been brought about not altogether by a diminution of crime, but in part by wiser and more effective methods of dealing with crime, need not be denied, yet, after all allowance is made for these factors, there remains a showing in humiliating contrast with the record we have been making.

It is not necessary to charge the prohibition laws with responsibility for bringing about the crime situation with which this country has been so gravely concerned during the past five or ten years, that is not the point. The point is that the contrast between what has happened here and what has happened in England reduces to absurdity the claims in regard to

crime that prohibitionists have always put to the very forefront of their agitation

What would the prohibitionists be saying now if the contrast had been the other way? Suppose that half of *our* prisons had been emptied, suppose that the number of *our* prisoners had been reduced to one-half, while England was grappling with the overcrowding of her prisons and the increase of her prison population. Would not this be pointed to as conclusive proof of the virtues of prohibition? Would not every opponent of prohibition be branded as wickedly refusing to sanction a measure which experience had demonstrated to be the great remedy for crime?

Impermeable as the Anti-Saloon mind is to evidence and argument, even that mind has been affected to some extent by a showing so conspicuous and so indisputable as that of our crime experience. In 1925, when the experiment was five years old, Mr. Wayne B. Wheeler, who was then the head of the Anti-Saloon League, contributed to the August number of *Current History* an article in which he declared that "so long as the use of intoxicants is general, crime must inevitably increase," while "with prohibition it has decreased." Almost at the very moment this article appeared, Sir William Joynson Hicks was making the statement to which I have referred. And also at the very same moment, the gravity of crime conditions in this country, after five years of prohibition, was signally acknowledged by the formation of a national Crime Commission to grapple with the problem.

But there are limits, apparently, to the audacity even of Anti-Saloon League chiefs. Last December the present head of that organization, Mr. F. Scott McBride, issued a Christmas greeting to the American people, reciting the glories of prohibition. He told us that the slums had been abolished, that destitution had ceased to be a problem to our charity organizations, and he made other statements of a similarly delightful and authentic character. But he said not a word about crime.

## III

Another prospect, held out with confidence to the American people when the Eighteenth Amendment was pending, was that when we had taken this step, the nations of the world, impressed by our shining example, would follow our lead. In the psychology that underlay the adoption of the amendment, this notion of the triumphant march of prohibition played an extremely important part. Multitudes of unthinking people, and multitudes of people who are by no means unthinking, are powerfully swayed by the idea that a given movement is sweeping forward to success with irresistible force. Many a person who might otherwise have been very reluctant to assent to national prohibition gave it his tacit or overt assent because he felt that it was bound to come, that opposition would be a mere kicking against the pricks, an attempt to stay the course of "manifest destiny." State after state, we were told, had joined the prohibition ranks, and country after country would do the like if we set the example.

But what has happened since we adopted the glorious amendment? Province after province of Canada has renounced prohibition after experiencing its operation, and in Europe no country has adopted it, while two that had it have given it up. Our only company now consists of little Prince Edward Island, with a population of ninety thousand out of Canada's nine million, and on the other side of the water little Finland, which is having the same kind of happy time with its experiment that we are having with ours.

What I have thus far been speaking of is matter of common knowledge, and of significance so palpable that it cannot be missed by anyone whose mind is not closed to the truth. When we come to the question of drink itself—that is, the use and abuse of intoxicating liquors—there is a great mass of conflicting evidence and statistical information, concerning which it is possible to hold widely divers views. It cannot be deter-

mined how the total amount of drinking compares with what it was before prohibition. There are doubtless large classes among whom it has diminished and other classes among whom it has increased—when measured by alcoholic content—and become greatly worse in character. I shall not venture to pronounce any judgment as to the net balance in this matter.

On the question of downright drunkenness, however, the question is much clearer. Statistics whose general trustworthiness is plain show that while arrests for drunkenness went down to a very low point in the first year or two of national prohibition, they have risen steadily and rapidly since, and are now at about the same point as they were just before prohibition came in. The significance of this is not adequately realized until we take into account the decline in drunkenness that had been going on for many years, even decades—a decline, which, if continued during the past ten years, would have brought the figure down to a much lower point than that at which it now stands.

Upon this subject one more word must be said. Whatever may be true of the total volume of drinking, decent drinking has been almost abolished. The drinking that now goes on, of which the enormous volume can be denied by no person of intelligence, is practically all lawless drinking, and a very large part of it is drinking which, quite apart from the question of lawlessness, is of a far worse kind than we had before the era of national prohibition.

If we were to grant every claim of what has been accomplished in regard to drink—or at least every claim not manifestly preposterous—it would be a pitiful result to point to as our reward for the unrest, the bitterness, the corruption, the denial of liberty, the abandonment of historic American principles, the political and moral degradation, which have gone with the attempt to force this measure upon the American people in face of the resistance of something like half of their entire number. And finally, it must be remembered that whatever beneficial results have been attained could have been at-

tained fully as completely by rational methods of control, involving none of this terrible sacrifice

#### IV

With this situation confronting us, it is not surprising that the prohibitionists have been placing great emphasis on the extraordinary prosperity which the last seven or eight years have witnessed. That this prosperity has coincided with the prohibition régime is an extremely fortunate circumstance for the defenders of prohibition. It is probable that in some slight degree the phenomenal development of our material prosperity may be attributable to prohibition, that no more than this is true is sufficiently shown by one simple consideration.

I have looked into the two bulky volumes entitled *Recent Economic Changes*, issued in 1929 by the great commission which was formed by Mr. Hoover when he was Secretary of Commerce, and of which Mr. Hoover himself was the chairman. In this work, the result of years of study, there are elaborate discussions of the causes of the unparalleled prosperity we have been enjoying, but among these causes prohibition is not so much as mentioned.

Getting away from these matters of statistics and economics, let us look in conclusion at some products of prohibition which are in no need of statistics to establish their existence, nor of any complicated reasoning to determine their origin. Lawlessness and contempt for law on a scale never before heard of in our country, or in any country which we would be willing to regard as in the same class with ours, stare us all in the face. So amply is this recognized throughout the nation that it is needless here to insist upon it or to moralize upon it. It will be more to the purpose to point out that not only is this state of things with us, but that it was clearly predicted and solemnly warned against by some of the wisest of our public men before we took the reckless plunge.

Probably the most remarkable of these warnings was that



uttered by ex-President Taft in 1918 From this warning I shall make a brief quotation, which, however, gives only a slight indication of the gravity and impressiveness of his whole statement

The theory that the national government can enforce any law will yield to the stubborn circumstances, and a Federal law will become as much a subject of contempt and ridicule in some parts of the nation as laws of this kind have been in some States .

If through the abnormal psychology of war thirty-six States are induced to approve a national prohibition amendment now, we can never change it, though a great majority of the people may come later to see its utter failure Thirteen prohibition States can always be counted on to prevent a retracing of the foolish step We shall thus hang a permanent millstone around our necks

That millstone has been hung around our necks, but, thank Heaven, there is at last some prospect of its not being permanent The longer the American people have felt its weight, the more intolerable they have found it, and there are abundant signs that, however tremendous may be the task, they are becoming more and more resolved to rid themselves of the millstone and stand erect again as a nation of freemen Prohibitionists keep pointing to the fact—and it *is* a fact—that their control of Congress remains as complete as ever, but they must know, just as everybody else knows, that year after year the tide of opposition has been rising and has now a formidable strength such as, even three or four years ago, few anti-prohibitionists dared to hope for

In state after state, when the people have been given a chance to vote directly on the issue, they have expressed their decisive condemnation of the present state of things And not only the record of large popular majorities, such as those in New York, Massachusetts, and several other states, but—what is in some ways even more significant—the action of bar associations in our great cities has testified to the depth and extent

of this condemnation. One of the latest of these was that of the Bar Association of San Francisco. A resolution demanding the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment was passed upon by a formal vote which polled the entire association, and it resulted in the adoption of the resolution by a majority of five to one. If anybody thinks that a sentiment so deep and so pervasive will have no practical result simply because it has not as yet been reflected in the composition of Congress, he must have a very queer notion of the potency of public opinion in our republic.

## V

The close of the first decade of prohibition was marked by two events almost coincident in date. One was the Anti-Saloon League's celebration of the tenth anniversary of the amendment, the other was the preliminary report of the Wickersham Commission. In each of these one may easily see a reflection of the state of things upon which I have just been commenting. But it is recognized in the two cases in diametrically opposite ways.

The Anti-Saloon League celebration meeting passed by unanimous vote a resolution declaring its opposition to all referendums on the subject of prohibition. The Wickersham Commission, although in its specific recommendation it confined itself to matters relating to the efficiency of enforcement, began its report with a preamble which points in quite a different direction. "It is possible," says this preamble, "wholly to set off observance of the prohibition act from the large question of the views and habits of the American people with respect to private judgment as to statutes and regulations affecting their conduct."

To him who has eyes to see, the very heart of the situation confronting us can be discerned in these two contrasting declarations. The Anti-Saloon League says, in effect, "We have got prohibition nailed down in the Constitution, we don't

want to know, and we don't want the nation to know, how the American people feel about it" The Wickersham Commission says, in effect "It is impossible to tell what is the right course to pursue in regard to prohibition unless we take into most serious account the actual feelings and desires of the American people"

There lies the choice It is the choice between blind force and entrenched power on the one hand, and on the other hand reasonable consideration of what can be done and what ought to be done, in the light of the feeling of the people toward the law

Ten years ago the ironclad finality of the Eighteenth Amendment was accepted by almost everybody To-day a commission appointed by President Hoover, and certainly not hostile to prohibition, utterly rejects that ironclad finality And the time is coming when the sentence that I have quoted from the Wickersham report will be regarded, not as a generous concession to liberal opinion, but only as one of the early and faint indications of something infinitely more thorough-going In its ultimate significance the Wickersham report's admission means nothing less than the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment For there is no halfway place at which we can stop if we are once more to have national harmony, state self-government, and that respect for the Constitution of the United States which has been the chief cornerstone of our political history

## The Wets Give Me a Pain in the Neck<sup>1</sup>

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ARTHUR BRIGGS

Arthur Briggs has been engaged in literary work for twenty years. According to *The Forum*, he has written "three or four novels, hundreds of short stories, scores of articles, and several thousand pieces of verse"

THE wets give me a pain in the neck. Not personally—for some of my best friends are wets—but politically, economically, and socially. They give me the aforesaid pain because it seems to my narrow, intolerant, bigoted, and hypocritical dry mind that as soon as a wet begins to talk about prohibition—and usually he won't talk about anything else—his brain goes soggy.

My club is an example. Its roster is made up of names famous in professions that require the highest quality of direct, effective, and clear thinking. But fully half, perhaps even two-thirds, are wet.

"Aha!" comes the wringing comment, "this brilliant assemblage is made up of wets. Whaddyuh mean a wet's brain doesn't function?"

I mean it doesn't function. I mean that if these men used the warped logic, the stale sentiments, the distorted memory in their professions that they use in discussing prohibition, they would be in the poorhouse. When prohibition comes up they go ga-ga.

In my club I have heard discussions of nearly everything human and divine, and because the controversialists were using

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the same brains with which they achieved their success, these arguments have been such as to dazzle, delight, and educate

Then somebody mentions prohibition! And things go hay-wire

I don't want anybody to tell *me* about the narrowness, intolerance, and bigotry of the drys Any time the wets get going in my club I can spot you a Carrie Nation, two Dr Clarence True Wilsons, and any number of arid Methodist bishops, and still win the game of intolerance in two moves I know because, being known as a dry in the club, I have no rest from persecution Time was when I essayed reasonable argument, until I found that I was not arguing with reason but only the same stale statements

Then I tried avoidance I would not argue I would listen I would even nod But it isn't enough that I admit that some dry propaganda is foolish, that there are too many speakeasies, that it's too bad a gentleman can't get a drink, that I'd like to have some good liquor myself None of this suffices, not with these broad-minded Saharaphobes

They won't be content until I recant Volstead and all his works, and lift my voice to cry "There is no King but Barley-corn!"

"FOUL! FOUL!"

Let's just try for a few minutes to apply simple high school logic to some of these wet arguments that are gravely put forward time and again See if, by this test, you don't get an ache in the cervical vertebræ yourself.

1 *"The Eighteenth Amendment never came to a popular vote therefore it is all wrong"*

Let's assume that it would be desirable to amend the Constitution by a process of popular election, and I believe it would The very amendment providing for a plebiscite on amendments would have to be adopted in the same manner as the Eighteenth And until the regular method of altering the Constitution—by which the Eighteenth and all other amend-

ments have been added—is changed, all talk of referendums and all referendums themselves are futile and ridiculous in law and in fact

There hasn't been an argument offered against the manner of passing the Eighteenth Amendment which wouldn't invalidate all the others. And I'm willing to wager that Mr Darrow and any other of the distinguished lawyers who inveigh against prohibition would, if pinned down to the pure, cold logic of law, admit this perfectly obvious fact. Their attitude toward the Eighteenth Amendment is decidedly legalistic special pleading. This they realize, and that they don't approach it as they would any other legal question is one of the reasons why the wets give me a pain in the neck.

2 *"It was 'put over' during the Great War and while our boys were in the trenches"*

"Put over" my eye! It was a pushover. The pushing had been done steadily for twenty-five years by the Anti-Saloon League, and if the wets were good sports, they would admit that they'd been beaten by hard, fair fighters. But the wets yell "Foul!" and claim they weren't looking. What did they have to do to defeat the passing of the amendment in Congress? Control half the state legislatures? No—only thirteen. How many did they control? Three!

Pushover is correct.

And since the Eighteenth Amendment, like all the others, is not subject to plebiscite, the boys in the trenches would have had little effect either way. There is, too, the thought that *possibly* those four million soldiers, sixty per cent of them from dry districts, would not have voted unanimously wet.

#### THE PUBLIC BE PLEASED!

Congressmen are elected to represent their constituents. If they don't represent the general sentiment of their districts more or less habitually, they don't remain in Congress. And steadily the dry vote in Congress has grown. If Congress, personally wet or dry, is politically dry, it is the best indica-

tion in the world that the country is dry. Indeed, a Congressman who is personally wet but who votes dry is a surer barometer of the power of public opinion than the man whose own opinions happen to coincide with the sentiment of his district.

The "tyranny" of the Anti-Saloon League over Congress is due to the political fact that Congressmen *know* that the League can defeat them if they vote wet. It is not the tyranny of a fanatic minority, but the tyranny of majorities in election booths. Add that up and you have your plebiscite—the only kind that means anything in this political arena of the United States.

3 *"But the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act constitute sumptuary legislation, and you can't regulate people's habits by law."*

Of all the statements delivered from the wet camp, this has always caused the most poignant ache in the vicinity of my Adam's apple. Of course the Volstead Act is sumptuary legislation! So is the drug act, the pure food act, housing laws, the Federal meat inspection law, anti-spitting ordinances, quarantine for infectious disease, traffic regulations, dog licenses, and just about every other statute that has been found necessary to regulate the habits and restrict the personal liberty of individuals for the sake of the rest of us.

Drinking isn't a crime in the sense that burglary or murder are crimes. But neither is driving the wrong way through a one-way street, keeping chickens in an apartment, dumping garbage in the street, swimming in a reservoir, building a frame house in Manhattan, or keeping cold storage food in a New York grocery without a sign proclaiming the fact. None of these things is a real crime, as are theft and arson. But you can and will be arrested for doing them, and if it weren't for this sort of sumptuary regulation of personal and business habits, life would be utterly impossible in communities of more than four persons. If prohibition is to be swept aside because

it's sumptuary, then all this body of protective legislation is due for the dump heap

4 "Prohibition isn't enforced"

No, not very well Neither is the law against murder Since less than eight per cent of murderers are convicted, let's abolish the law against murder Think of the money we'd save Or let's license it—think of the revenue!

Just as logical as the wets' talk of the unenforceability of prohibition

MAYOR WALKER'S SPEAKEASIES

Most of my wet friends at the club are always talking to me about New York's 32,000 speakeasies

This chatter adds to the pain around my collar Perhaps there are 32,000 places in New York where liquor can occasionally be obtained But if the wets mean that there are 32,000 places where the main business is selling booze, and which are even remotely comparable to the 12,000 saloons that dispensed it before prohibition, they are babbling bunk

There were not less than twenty-five saloons within a radius of three city squares from my home in Manhattan in 1919 There may be twenty-five speakeasies within that same radius now I haven't been able to locate more than twelve that distantly resemble saloons in the amount that passes over the tables, but they may be there I do know, however, that in this district in wet New York I don't see one drunk where I used to see five I don't see—and I'm up late of nights often—one truck that could possibly be a liquor truck where I once saw ten. And if it's delivered in passenger cars or by hand, it would take *some* procession to come within a rivulet of the mighty flood that used to flow in these parts.

It's easy to say that people drink more since prohibition, but they don't They can't, even in New York, because it isn't nearly so easy to get.

As to the wets' contention that it's a hard law to enforce,



it's not a tenth as hard as the narcotics law—and very few wets want that abolished. You can pack enough heroin or morphine in your pockets to make a fortune, but to make any “important” money out of bootlegging or a speakeasy you have to have two things—customers and a source of supply. Now you know, and I know, and our wet friends know that if a speakeasy has enough customers to make business profitable, the cop on the beat is aware of it. He doesn't have to be very bright—he merely has to make his rounds and listen. The same goes for cooking alcohol or running a still big enough to count.

I cheerfully assert that any police commissioner in the United States, or any mayor, could dry up his town in a week if he wanted to badly enough. He would need only to tell his force that they were to close every known speakeasy in their districts, and keep them closed, or lose their jobs. It wouldn't mean spectacular raids, it wouldn't take a special force. It *would* take guts on the part of the officer at the head of the force. But if he stood fast until the first wet storm blew over, he'd be in line for the Presidency.

If there are 32,000 speakeasies in Jimmy Walker's city, it is Mr. Walker's fault—not that of the prohibition law.

5 “*Prohibition brings lawlessness*”

Ho hum, what a long gray beard *that* one has!

Now I'll tell one. When those twenty-five saloons that I mentioned earlier were flourishing, they were allowed to keep open sixteen hours a day, even though they were supposed to be closed on Sundays.

Such liberality ought to satisfy almost anybody. But not those dear, law-abiding old saloon keepers whom my wet friends are always lamenting. Of those twenty-five saloons at least fifteen were open (the side door, of course)—defying the law—on Sunday. And if I had two dollars for every time I've met a cop in those back rooms, I could afford to give this article away instead of selling it.

LAWLESSNESS<sup>2</sup> OH, YEAH<sup>2</sup>

Eheu! Fugaces—how a wet's memory does forget! How he forgets that it was the inherent and incorrigible lawlessness of the saloon keeper, the brewer behind him, the distiller too, that made people decide to knock out the whole business. No intelligent dry expected that these lawless lads who observed no limitation, however reasonable, and who corrupted the police as a matter of ordinary business overhead, would suddenly become law-abiding and respectable. We've had, and will have for some time to come, a lawless time with prohibition. But the lawlessness began long before the Eighteenth Amendment—was, in fact, the reason for it.

6 *"Well, of course we don't want the saloon back, but—now, for instance, light wine and beer. . . ."*

Talk about dry hypocrisy!

They *do* want the saloon back, ladies and gents. Harken to the reminiscences of nights at Old Tim's place, where they wouldn't sell to a drunk and always obeyed the law. A rosy haze of sweetness and light they paint around the old swinging door. But not for argument or publication.

I could embrace a frank wet who would blurt forth a hope that the saloon *should* come back. Being by some particular chemistry of my interior one of those birds who really can take it or let it alone, the saloon never did me any personal harm. I have had some very delightful jingles in saloons. I have heard a lot of good talk—or maybe it just seemed good talk—in saloons. I saw them pass with personal regret, just as I'd watch the passing to the gallows of a boon companion who had chopped his wife into small bits. In each instance I feel that I've lost a pleasant acquaintance, but that I must acquiesce in the public policy which removed them.

Hence I can regard sympathetically the honesty of the wet who wants the saloon back because he and his friends enjoyed it, and to the devil with the other issues involved. I don't agree,

but I respect him. The rest want it, but they're too hypocritical to say so

As to light wines and beers, by personal observation I have found that

81 2/3% of those who advocate them never drank wine when they could get it

46% never drank beer at all

92% drank champagne when somebody else paid for it, but bought cocktails or highballs when paying for their own

8% drank light wines and beer in preference to hard liquor

86% admitted that while abroad they specialized in cocktails

100% were drinking gin while they talked of light wines

In other words, my brethren, what the wets want is hooch, and don't let 'em kid you

Anyhow I'm curious to know how allowing beer and light wine is going to make it easier to prevent bootlegged hooch than now, when all alcoholic liquor is tabooed by law

7 "*But see what prohibition is doing to youth and to women!*"

Well, well, what *is* it doing? Wild youth isn't as wild as it's painted, statistics show that juvenile delinquency is decreasing. A great many women of the upper classes who didn't drink before prohibition drink now, but the Salvation Army can tell you that the women of the masses aren't drinking as they did in the days of the Family Entrance. And there are more of the masses than of the classes.

Besides, this drinking among youth and women is not solely a prohibition phenomenon. The problem exists also in England and France. They're fretting about it in Canada, too, where the noble experiment of putting the government in the saloon business hasn't abolished either the bootlegger or the speakeasy.

WHEN DRINKERS WERE DRINKERS

And here again the wet's memory goes conveniently hazy. Youth drank in my youth, even if the wets forget theirs. These

student statistics on drinking in college have to be taken with a salt pretzel or two. Students who take a shot once a month when they can get it count themselves as drinkers. When I went to college you didn't rank as a drinker unless you made a habit of sopping up a few daily and got edged once a month or oftener.

I might go on and tell you how, in my home town, at least ten of the young men of the best families went to moral wreckage or physical degeneration and death from habitual alcoholism within ten years of their matriculation, but though it's true, it might be doubted.

However, we'll leave this subject with the query as to how, to-day, you are to reduce the drinking among young people by making hooch cheaper and easier to get.

8 *"We have made ourselves the laughing stock of other nations."*

Yeah? Who's leffink?

A few visitors who think that, because they've been regaled with drinks at smart houseparties and dinners among the rich, everybody drinks as much as ever under prohibition.

If you read the foreign papers, you won't discover much laughter. What you will discover is an enormous amount of worrying about the Americanization of Europe—a fear of what the high-speed efficiency of America—which has accompanied, even if we assume that it hasn't been caused by, the Noble Experiment—will do to European industrialism and trade.

As far as I'm concerned, Europe may laugh its head off at our "fool sumptuary law." If countries that regulate most of the details of your daily life in a way that Americans wouldn't tolerate for five minutes choose to laugh at our method of dealing with booze, that's their privilege. They can laugh at my law while I laugh at theirs.

And while we're both laughing I can chuckle over the fact that France, for example—the model that the beer-and-light wine advocates point to so gleefully—drinks more hard liquor

than England does, or than we did in the days before prohibition I can get a giggle—or could if it seemed funny to me, which it doesn't—out of the intolerance of a country whose wine growers and distillers have just succeeded in barring from the schools any instruction whatsoever concerning the effects of alcohol on the human system Well, er—unless that instruction has to do with wine as a tonic and health beverage for children Maybe it is—I dunno—but those scrawny, pale-faced French kids are no ad for the vintner's stuff

WELL, WHAT HAVE YOU?

The greatest ache in my jugular region that I get from wet talk is the lack of any suggestion of a sensible substitute for prohibition True, government control and dispensaries are working, after a fashion, in other countries But they didn't work here—in South Carolina—and they're not working to exactly universal satisfaction in Norway, Sweden, or Canada

These noble experiments in other countries are, granting every wet claim, not so brilliantly successful as to warrant substituting them for our own system If after ten years the machinery of prohibition enforcement is still missing on three cylinders, how long might we expect it to be before government control would be even fifty per cent efficient? Why substitute the complexities of regulation, which failed for more than a hundred years, for the comparative simplicity of a policy that has had only ten years' trial and is by no means—again granting every wet claim—a total flop?

The most naive confession of wet futility that I have run across appeared in the editorial columns of a New York wet paper of the highest respectability I haven't the actual clipping before me, but this is the outline. A reader wrote as follows

"I note that your paper smites the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act hip and thigh at every opportunity But what have you to suggest as a workable substitute?"

To which the editor appended this reply

“It is, perhaps, a weakness in the anti-prohibition movement that it has no reasonably satisfactory policy to substitute ”

Probably the editor was fired for that confession, but for once a wet had inadvertently admitted the truth

# Does Wall Street Rule Us?—A Debate<sup>1</sup>

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NORMAN THOMAS AND WILLIAM BENNETT MUNRO

NORMAN THOMAS

Norman (Mattoon) Thomas (1884- ), formerly a minister of the Presbyterian Church, is now active as a writer, speaker, and campaigner of the Socialist Party. He has been the Socialist candidate for governor of New York (1924), mayor of New York City (1925, 1929), and for President of the United States (1928, 1932).

## I PLUTOCRACY IN THE SADDLE

NORMAN THOMAS

SO OBVIOUS is the control of our government in all its branches and all its divisions by the business interests of the country, so natural, if not inevitable, is such control on any reasonable analysis of the origin and development of the state and its essential relation to the prevailing economic system, that I find it as hard to argue the question before us as it always is to argue what seems axiomatic. I can understand an argument that business control of our government is good, not that it does not exist.

Indeed, the only ground that I can discover for a plausible negative arises from a misunderstanding of what we are affirming. To say that business controls government is not to affirm a picturesque open or closed conspiracy of Wall Street magnates who give orders to docile judges, governors, and presi-

<sup>1</sup> From *The Forum*. Reprinted by permission of The Forum Magazine. Copyright, July, 1929.

dents To say that business interests control government is not to affirm that such control is absolute, dictatorial, and free from all necessity to placate the masses who are governed There never has been any government over any long period that did not have to rest upon some sort of acquiescence, bought at some price, of the governed In our country I am aware that our magnates think the price is occasionally high, I have heard some of them deplore the deference Wall Street must pay to Main Street, and the high brokerage fees the politicians collect from them as a price for keeping things quiet

It is generally known that the triumphant Mr Hoover was not the first choice in the regions south of Canal Street, New York Nevertheless, under a system which he curiously mis-calls "rugged individualism," this same Mr Hoover is a militant and intelligent advocate of the closest and most helpful relations of government in the service of business He is the latest of the long series of presidents not one of whom has been elected against the definite opposition of business Sometimes business has had to accept second-choice presidents, but never since Jackson came out of the West has it lost in a straight fight to the farmers or industrial workers under whatever banner the latter might fight Emphatically, I do not except Roosevelt in 1904 and Wilson in 1912, both of whom had strong business backing and both of whom chastened business for its own good and, especially by their foreign policies, put it farther on the road to empire

It is in the shaping of foreign policy that big business control has been most obvious The nation which in 1851 went wild over the Hungarian patriot, Kossuth, was not morally better than the same nation which closed its doors on the Hungarian patriot, Károlyi, in 1928 The difference is that a new nation could afford to be enthusiastic over liberty abroad, to-day, as the world's creditors, our bankers and investors must make "law and order" their God—that is, they must maintain the situation best adapted for receiving dividends

Men of such diverse temperaments as Roosevelt, Taft, Wil-



son, Harding, and Coolidge have followed a fairly uniform policy toward Latin America—a policy only to be explained under the curious hypnotism of nationalism in terms of land concessions, oil wells, loans, and trade advantages. We ordinary folks let ourselves be taxed and our brothers in the marines face bullets and tropical germs to collect interest on the adventuresome dollars of stay-at-home citizens—not for the greater glory of God and country, but for the profit of big business! Where we hesitate, as in Mexico, and send Morrow to “say it with flowers,” it is because Mexico is somewhat more than a marine-sized job for those youths who enlist to see the world and sometimes end by seeing both worlds. Still, our government has done very well by business in Mexico.

In world politics it is impossible to explain our entry into the Great War except that our benevolent neutrality to the Allies had given big business such stakes in Allied victory that we could not hold back. More ideal reasons were sincerely, even passionately, held, but it was not Belgium or the ravaging of Armenia which put us into the war, it was the economic interest, duly rationalized, of a business class which could trade with only one set of combatants. Is this not supreme proof of the relation of government and business?

Business has had almost equal success with legislation and its enforcement at home. By direct control over Congress or, more indirectly, through the executive and the courts, it has not only got the tariff and fiscal legislation it wanted but it has blocked or virtually nullified most of the legislation it did not want. It has been about as successful in the states as in the nation. Thus this great industrial country of ours is unique in having no national child labor law, no national labor code, and almost no social insurance, state or national. It offers to the masses of the workers no security against sickness, unemployment, and old age—this though we have a standing army of some four million unemployed and one-third of our people sixty-five years and over are wholly or partially dependent on charity. Labor’s vigorous struggle against the use of injunc-

tions in industrial disputes has so far been unavailing, although the wiser conservatives have recognized the dangerous strain on our judicial system which results when judges take it upon themselves to enjoin literally every peaceful act necessary to the successful conduct of a strike, leaving to the strikers only the recourse of private prayer

Turning to another field, we find that the failure of regulation over public utilities is so notorious that it is becoming a matter of public discussion. Even the able defender of the private corporations, Professor Philip Cabot of Harvard, admits the weakness of regulation. How can he help it when the New York telephone case has dragged along nine years and when, without even a protest from the Commission, the first act of a gas and electric merger in New York City was to slap a seven-million-dollar increase on the dividend charges which consumers must pay? Private business can almost ruin itself and waste the heritage of posterity by such chaotic mismanagement of a natural resource as characterizes the soft coal industry, and still its power has been such as to keep the government from intervening. According to sworn testimony before the Federal Trade Commission, the electric power interests, in order to keep their control over government, have resorted to hiring politicians, bribing newspapers by advertising, and invading schools and colleges with their unsigned propaganda. All this without arousing any overwhelming storm of disapproval!

Nowhere is the control of business more serious than in our judicial system. Here, emphatically, it is indirect rather than direct, but it is not for that reason less real. More than in any other alleged democracy, property is the concern of our courts. They do their ordinary business of administering justice to individuals and between individuals so badly as to call forth weighty protests from leaders of the bar. Our criminal record is a national disgrace. The courts are a very unsatisfactory bulwark to civil liberties. Over against a rather optimistic statement of progress in government, Professor

Charles A. Beard significantly sets "a story of decline in our ancient Ideals of Liberty"

And the instruments responsible for this decline are the courts, which, in exercising the power of injunction to which we have referred, are thus perverting their legitimate duties. Read the story of recent great strikes and you will observe that in spirit the courts can scarcely be distinguished from the private police and the state constabulary, which are the recognized agents of employers in industrial struggles (Here, of course, there are degrees of police and judicial tyranny in different parts of the country.) In short, our unsatisfactory police and judicial system, whatever its other derelictions, can be trusted to show a tender regard for property. It has become a byword that in a criminal court it is difficult to convict a million dollars and impossible to convict ten million dollars. The Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, meant presumably as a defense to the life and property of our people, has in practice become a sure refuge only for property. It has not helped Sacco and Vanzetti, Mooney and Billings, or many Negroes who found state justice scarcely better than lynch laws, but under this same amendment public utility companies have been assured an eight-per-cent return on the inflated valuation of reproduction costs!

In none of this do I charge direct dictation by business interests, I charge something more subtle and more dangerous—such a permeation by the business point of view, even in courts, that property becomes God.

Nowhere has that perversion of justice become so hideously evident as in the continued imprisonment of Mooney and Billings in California. For ten years it has been evident to anyone who can read plain English that they are innocent of the crime of exploding the Preparedness Day bomb. The perjurer who was chief witness against them has confessed. The judge who sentenced them is now the champion of their innocence. The jurors have signed a petition for their pardon. But the higher courts of California have been unable to find a remedy

for this tragic miscarriage of justice, and no governor in these years has been willing to pardon them in the face of the feeling held by the respectable—that is, the business sections of the community—that Mooney and Billings are labor agitators and ought to be kept in jail anyway

The most striking thing about the American scene is the degree to which the public itself has accepted or adopted this business point of view, which prevails even in the administration of justice Long before Karl Marx, Harrington, in sixteenth-century England, observed that “the distribution of power follows the distribution of property” That is a generalization true in lands other than ours What is unique here is the luck or skill which for the time being has so successfully indoctrinated a political democracy with the business point of view The vast resources of a new country, the lack of a feudal tradition or of a homogeneous working class, the relative prosperity of postwar America in comparison with European countries—these things have given the business interests their chance They have improved it well The older resentment of little business against big, or of farmers against Wall Street, is, in 1929, either lessening or losing power There is no such effective outcry against chain store monopolies in distribution as there was against the earlier trusts in the field of production Psychologically the wide distribution of stocks to workers and consumers has, for the moment, spread the gospel of ownership Even in this supposedly liberal reorganization the advantage remains with Wall Street, because the more scattered are small stockholders, the smaller the block of stock which insiders need to hold to maintain their control.

But more important than any other single factor in the control of big business over government is its domination over the agencies of information and communication Who was the prophetic Greek who said, “Let me write the *Saturday Evening Post* of the people and I care not who write its laws”? We live in an age in which newspapers are no longer the mouthpieces of ambitious political teachers and leaders, they

are an immense and expensive industry, dependent upon big advertising. Increasingly these publications belong to newspaper chains whose owners are the business and social familiars of other magnates. The uncritical newspaper acceptance of Mr. Mellon's theory that the way to prosperity for the poor was to untax the rich can only be explained in the light of the aforementioned facts. Actually it was as plain as daylight that a nation exporting capital at a rate of more than a billion a year did not need more investment capital but more purchasing power for the masses. But how rare were the editors—Democratic or Republican—who ventured so elemental an observation!

Movies are another big business. So is the radio. At first the average radio station maintained a censorship in behalf of business and patriotic orthodoxy more stupid and more rigorous than any newspaper, even the most reactionary—in proof whereof, did space permit, I could tell amusing tales. That period is passing, as again I can testify from my own experience. In the last campaign I found the National Broadcasting Company and other stations decent or even generous in their treatment. But they have to pay their way. That means they have to charge big prices in political campaigns, and the poor don't have the money.

When we turn from these agencies of communication to schools, churches, and colleges, it can fairly be said that they also illustrate the ancient truth that "he who pays the piper picks the tune."

The main weapon, then, whereby an owning class keeps its control is cajolery. But it is willing, if necessary, to use coercion, partly through its influence over the police and the lower courts, more largely through its control of jobs. Every historian admits the direct pressure employers put on their workers in the Bryan campaign of 1896. Similar pressure against La Follette in 1924 is not yet so generally accepted as part of the record. But in that year farmers found reason to moderate

their progressive activities at the hint of banks that held their mortgages, young business men suddenly found that silence would be the better part of wisdom if they wanted accommodation at the banks, workers were more or less specifically threatened with loss of their jobs—all this if the local vote for La Follette was too large I shall never forget what happened in one industrial city in 1924 Early in the campaign I found the workers full of progressive zeal Then came a slump in the town's main industry Some thousands were turned off When I went back near the end of the campaign the whole city was in the grip of fear There were rumors of threats that to be active for La Follette was to be a marked man for the next batch to go out on the street Perhaps they were false The fear was desperately real Indeed, the most profound impression of years of campaigning in America is the tremendous extent of fear, usually fear for one's job Diogenes might find a passably honest man among us with a lantern, he would need a powerful searchlight to find many truly *free* men

Not all coercion is prior to the balloting There is the coercion of theft afterward Of course business interests do not steal the votes They merely look the other way while the political machines they subsidize do the job It is only in Nicaragua that Americans are zealots for honest elections To give one instance in 1927, Tammany, by a variety of devices, stole reelection from Judge Jacob Panken of the Municipal Court In no case could his supporters get legal redress For instance, strong testimony was presented before a magistrate that in a certain district a false vote had been read from the voting machine, that the nominal Republican election board members had signed the returns in blank and left the polling place, that one Democratic official had voted where he did not live and that the other should have been barred from his place by a conviction for grand larceny The magistrate after weeks of delay refused even to hold these men for a grand jury But that, you say, isn't the fault of business but of a corrupt

machine Perhaps, but the point is that neither in New York nor elsewhere do our respectable business leaders show real concern at such a situation They are too grateful to the machines they subsidize for keeping the people quiet Did not ex-Ambassador Gerard (if he was correctly quoted) once remind the Harvard Club of New York what it owed Tammany for keeping New York from going Socialist?

This leads us to consider somewhat more fully than we have yet done the rôle of our political parties as the convenient tools of an owning, a business, or more accurately, a capitalist class Parties are a necessary device in political democracies They tend to divide as to which political philosophies and programs conform to their appropriate economic interest Thus our American parties once expressed the real difference in interest between the agrarians behind Jefferson and the rising mercantile and industrial class behind Hamilton At a much later period there was some truth in the observation that the Democrats represented small business against big There is no such distinction to-day We have two parties with but a single thought how to get and keep office Their platforms are interchangeable Every important bit of legislation is passed by votes that wreck party lines To say that an official is Republican or Democratic is not to describe him at all Except for the strange power of traditional names, we could just as well call our parties Reds and Blues or Team One and Team Two. They are rival organizations seeking power How they are organized and how little their organization has to do with principles, Frank Kent has made delightfully clear in his *Great Game of Politics*

Now, for our purpose, the important part of the story is that an organization like Tammany Hall or the Republican machine in Philadelphia—either of them only accidentally Democratic or Republican—is a broker between the classes who support them and the masses who vote for them Their function is to keep the dogs from jumping up on the table by the

smallest possible distribution of bones They dole out rewards to the faithful and punishments to the unfaithful Occasionally they feel it necessary to stand for some measure of social justice, but by and large they can be counted on to protect all "legitimate" and some illegitimate business interests and privileges—of course, for a price Is not the laborer worthy of his hire?

What is clear in the case of local organizations is somewhat less clear, but substantially true, of the national organizations of which they are a part It follows, therefore, that all our strong corporations and big magnates have to do is to insure in both companies—that is, to contribute to both campaign funds and collect dividends afterward, as Mr Grundy of Pennsylvania now seeks to do in the form of higher tariffs Thus, in 1928, one Du Pont executive gives to the Democrats, another to the Republicans, one General Motors official to the Democrats, another to the Republicans Whoever wins, *they* won't lose Both parties are theirs and accept substantially their philosophy If an elected official shows signs of wandering, they can usually bring party pressure on him, in addition to their own store of arguments

This is immensely better than having one dictator who might get shot or one party which might provoke a rival organization based on principle Two parties to stage a good show annually and a roaring circus every four years to divert the people—what could be better? Is it any wonder that prominent Republicans, political and business leaders, have expressed concern for the health of the Democratic party following its third successive crushing defeat? They need their traditional rival just as Tammany needs some sort of Republican opposition in New York A devout and reasonably shrewd "captain of industry" who does not daily thank God for this great gift of two parties, both his for the campaign contributions, is an ingrate

It is by such devices as these that our industrial autocracy



renders our political democracy almost impotent. Indeed, its more sophisticated leaders may sometimes reflect how much better it is to teach people how to read and then give them what they should read, let them vote but control the parties through which they vote, than, like the stupid Czar of Russia, to try to keep the masses illiterate and voteless.

Yet I do not want to close on a note of absolute cynicism about democracy. Poor thing, it has enough critics, most of whom miss the point that the real enemy of true democracy is our economic autocracy. This autocracy is not absolute. It has had to yield something to actual or potential labor organizations, something occasionally to the farmers, something to sheer pressure of facts when private ownership has broken down, something to the tradition of democracy, something every now and then to actual political pressure, however imperfectly exercised. It has not always been either wise or united. When we look at history it is apparent that no dominant class is immortal. Our modern bourgeoisie is in no better position than the older aristocracies of feudalism were in their day.

In the long run the question is not so much—"Will government always remain in the hands of a business or owning class?"—but rather—"How can we best make government the servant of those whose labor of hand and brain keeps life going, without that appalling catastrophe toward which the rivalries of imperialist powers armed with incredibly deadly means of destruction logically tends?" To answer that question lies outside the scope of this debate. I can only say, somewhat dogmatically, that in America the possibilities of economic organization of farmers and workers (in the most inclusive sense of the word, both as producers and consumers) are by no means exhausted and that when the power of these groups is supplemented by political action through their own political party, there is at least a fighting chance that our government may be rescued from its present position as one of the most important possessions of big business.

For the purposes of this article, however, I need only quote

the words of the revered Warren Gamaliel Harding, who said that the business of America is business Why, then, should not business control the United States Government?

#### WILLIAM BENNETT MUNRO

William Bennett Munro (1875- ) has taught history, government, and political science at Williams College, Harvard University, and the California Institute of Technology, of which he is now a member of the Executive Council He has published many books and articles in his field of interest

### II BONDAGE EXCHANGED FOR BONDS

#### WILLIAM BENNETT MUNRO

WHEN a proposition seems difficult or impossible to prove, one way of escape from the dilemma is to declare it self-evident, axiomatic, and nonarguable Mr Thomas begins by affirming that the control of government by the business interests is in that category Business controls government, although not as the result of a conspiracy, nor in a dictatorial way, nor against the consent of the governed And it is not big business alone that exercises the control Little business has become its ally. In a word, the American electorate has become indoctrinated with the business point of view, and for that reason real democracy has been replaced by an economic autocracy

It is true, of course, that we have become a property-minded nation. During the past fifteen years there has been an extraordinary diffusion of material prosperity among the industrial workers of the United States In Europe, the World War and the subsequent inflation served not only to diminish the sum-total of wealth but to narrow its distribution The middle

class declined in size and the proletariat expanded. But in the United States the outcome was precisely the reverse. Literally millions of Americans have been pushed during the past dozen years into the category of property owners.

If you have any doubts on this score, just study the list of stockholders in any of the large industrial corporations. The vast increase of names, each with a few shares to its credit, will be found impressive. Or look at the steady expansion in savings bank deposits, brought about mainly by the increased number of small accounts. Consider the popularity which investment trusts have attained in recent years, largely through the multiplication of small investors. All in all, and for better or worse, we have become a nation of capitalists, big and little, with more of them to the square mile than can be found anywhere else on earth.

Under the circumstances it is small wonder that the country has become permeated with the business point of view, as Mr. Thomas complains. A nation of capitalists will inevitably show friendliness to capitalism—so long as human nature remains what it is. It will refuse to get stirred up over issues which would cause great popular commotion in countries less well endowed with material wealth. The desire to be rich is strong in men everywhere, and nowhere is it stronger than in America.

Moreover, this desire to increase one's own worldly prosperity is by no means a reprehensible trait when we bear in mind that under modern conditions of industrial production, the individual prosperity of one man cannot be increased very far without furthering the economic advantage of others. Every profitable day's work on the farm, for example, produces two or three days' employment for workers in the flour mills and the packing plants, on the railroads and in the banks. Hence the farmer has been one of our chief city-builders, although he is not always proud of his handiwork. Similarly, the prosperity of the industrial worker, his increased purchasing power, and his higher standard of living all react to the

benefit of agriculture Prosperity cannot be kept in quarantine It follows all the major routes of economic infection There is fundamentally no conflict of interest between industry and agriculture, although all the rabble-rousers from Daniel Shays to Eugene V Debs have tried to make people believe the contrary

The true test of an economic order is whether it tends to promote a wide diffusion of material comfort among all classes of the people Does it push production to the peak and give everyone a greater share than he would otherwise have? Does it augment purchasing power on a nation-wide scale? Judged by this test, the people of the United States have no reason to envy those of any other country The standard of living among American farmers and industrial workers has reached a higher level than the world has ever seen at any other time or in any other place To be sure, absolute justice in the distribution of what a great nation produces, year after year, has not been attained either here or elsewhere, and probably never will be, but the United States has achieved a nearer approximation to it than has any other country, big or little, in three thousand years of human history

And in any event, the character of a nation's economic organization cannot be determined by a mere exercise of human judgment or discretion No people, by merely taking thought for to-morrow and marking their ballots this way or that, can determine whether a business spirit shall be allowed to infiltrate the national mentality Such matters are largely matters of geographic and racial predestination In the United States, the capitalistic system, so-called, is not the outcome of human perversity, or class tyranny, or a conspiracy of bond-holders in the constitutional convention of 1787.

Three hundred and some odd years ago the Puritan tradition, with its aggressive individualism, was implanted in a new continent whose vast natural resources were waiting to be exploited The Puritans' motto was "Up and smite! By the Spirit of the living God ye shall prevail" So he up and smote

—forests and field, along one frontier after another, till he made the land his own. Fervent in spirit, he was not slothful in business. He sought justification by work as well as by faith, and he put the proceeds into his own pocket. Say what you will about the harshness of this Puritan strain, duly modified by the frontier environment, the fact remains that none other has been able to prevail over it in America to this day. Great stretches of the country cling with unyielding conviction to the old frontier concepts of *laissez faire*, free competition, and every man for himself as the very groundwork of all political action. From a fusion of two great forces—Puritan self-confidence and frontier opportunity—we have derived that “rugged individualism” which President Hoover approves and Mr. Thomas deplors. It has become ingrained in the national character.

In a society so heavily saturated with the spirit of economic individualism there is bound to be a relation of government and business—if you let the people have any say in the matter. Socialist writers assume that the greed of the capitalist is the basis of individualism, they ignore the acquisitive passion of the great multitudes. The desire of the masses for comfort and security is the real basis upon which a capitalist system rests. Without that basis it could not endure a single decade. Ever since the day that man was condemned to earn bread by the sweat of his brow he has been devising means whereby to get the most bread for the least sweat.

To the great majority of men, accordingly, the immediate measure of civilization is the purchasing power of a day's labor. Nor is this statement so materialistic as it sounds, for the creation of an economic surplus is an essential prelude to any real advance in the realm of science, letters, and the arts. In the sequence of civilization, profits have always antedated poetry, and shopkeepers have come on the scene before sculptors. All higher culture has made its greatest advance in rich and prosperous nations during rich and prosperous epochs. Figs do not grow on thistles, or universities spring out of

barren soil Large-scale production under corporate management will provide immense resources for cultural advance if we give it time and opportunity

Of course it is not difficult to pick flaws in the existing order, as Mr Thomas does We have had spasms of dollar diplomacy, and American marines have at times gone to places where they had no right to be But no one who has studied the whole history of American foreign relations can fairly say that this national selfishness has been the dominating factor at all times or even most of the time Was the granting of independence to Cuba, for example, a sign of governmental control by big business? Or Roosevelt's mediation which brought to a close the war between Russia and Japan in 1905? Or the presence of our delegates at the Algeciras Conference? Or Coolidge's attempt to settle the Tacna-Arica dispute? Was the refusal of the United States to ratify the Peace of Versailles and to enter the League of Nations the work of American capitalists or of the common man? To ask these questions is to answer them

So with the making and enforcement of laws at home The money power has at times perverted both—in its own interest and to its own advantage But go to the fundamentals of government and of legislation There have been four amendments to the Constitution of the United States during the last half century, the era in which business has grown big These amendments dealt with the federal taxation of incomes, the direct election of United States senators, the prohibition of the liquor traffic, and the nation-wide establishment of woman suffrage Was big business responsible for any one of them? Or did the opposition in each case come chiefly from the industrial states?

Was it big business that impelled the establishment of public service commissions in all the states, or the use of the direct primary in most of them? Has big business been behind the movement for campaign-fund publicity, the initiative and referendum, the short ballot, municipal home rule, the taxation of inheritances, and the anti-usury laws? How came all these

things if, as Mr Thomas avers, business "has blocked or virtually nullified most of the legislation it did not want"?

Was it big business that inspired Roosevelt's conservation policy, or secured Wilson's backing for the Adamson Law, or compelled the regionalizing of the Federal Reserve system, or put the brakes on immigration, or caused Congress to propose to the states a national child labor amendment, or set the Federal Trade Commission at work on the investigation of educational propaganda by public utilities? Was Mr Hoover's recent action in withdrawing oil lands a sign of his subservience to the corporate exploiter? Is it the voice of the big business man or the little farmer that has successfully demanded the calling of Congress in special session to deal with the problem of farm relief? For every instance of governmental control by big business one can readily produce an equally impressive illustration to the contrary

The three most powerful lobbies operating at Washington in recent years have been those of the Farm Bureau Federation, the Anti-Saloon League, and the American Federation of Labor. Big business is not behind any of them. Its salvation from more congressional lashings than it has received is largely due to the fact that the farmer and the organized industrial worker have been unable to unite their political strength. They have failed to discern their fundamental harmony of interest and have magnified their superficial differences. The farmer's immediate objectives are high prices for foodstuffs and low prices for manufactured products. The industrial worker wants just the reverse, and quite naturally the employer is his ally when a tariff is being framed. That is why tariff schedules usually embody a series of compromises which give the industrial sections the better end of the bargain.

Speaking of tariffs, moreover, it is not altogether surprising that the majority of the American people, having the experience of England before their eyes, should exhibit a partiality for high protection. As against free trade and unemployment, with weekly doles to the unemployed (which is the English

method), the United States has preferred the plan of subsidizing the employer to keep his people employed. It is a plan that costs no more than the other, and its psychological superiority is beyond doubt.

Mr. Thomas will provoke no serious dissent from his assertion that "our criminal record is a national disgrace." He is also within bounds when he declares that perversions of justice have become "hideously evident" in this country. But the derelictions of the courts are by no means wholly attributable to the pressure of the propertied interests. It is difficult to convict a million dollars (Mr. Harry F. Sinclair's experience to the contrary notwithstanding), but have our criminal courts displayed any conspicuous zeal in sending to jail the racketeers and gangsters who prey upon legitimate business? Does Mr. Thomas believe that the police and judicial systems of Chicago, for example, have shown "a tender regard for property" during these past few years?

Police and juries, judges and district attorneys, are drawn from the ranks of the people. Being human, they are influenced in their point of view by the public opinion which surrounds them. They share its inclinations and aversions. They will display solicitude for the interests of property whenever and wherever property is popular. They will swing the other way with the popular current when it turns. In short, the courts are a mirror of the public mind. It must be so, for of such is the kingdom of democracy. The only way to keep police and courts from reflecting the public temper is to place them beyond popular control and responsibility.

The trouble with our administration of justice, unhappily, goes deeper than the Fourteenth Amendment and its insistence upon due process of law. It is the product of a dozen factors—the permeation of politics into police and judicial organizations, the shackling of the courts by procedural restrictions, the wholesale exemption of good citizens from jury service, the interminable appeals, exemptions, objections of counsel, and pleas in avoidance which are permitted, the low stand-



ards maintained in many states for admission to the bar, the abuse of the parole and probation systems, the undue expensiveness of all litigation—these and various other blemishes upon the American judicial system have given it an ill repute which is proverbial and deserved. No wonder! When a jury is locked up while the defendant who is being tried goes out on bail (as has repeatedly happened), is it any marvel that twelve good men and true are hard to find for service on jury panels? Out of a perverted judicial organization, perversions of justice are bound to come. But property is not the instigator of judicial incompetence, for it is property that has most to lose when the administration of law and order breaks down.

There is no reason why Mr. Thomas, as a Socialist, should be discouraged because the old resentment of little business against mergers and trusts and combines has been lessening or losing power, as is shown by the absence of any effective outcry against the chain store movement. Socialists should rather find consolation in the fact that this chaining of groceries and drug stores, this merging of banks, public utilities, and industrial concerns is leading the United States to Socialism more effectively than any organized propaganda could hope to do. So long as the whole process of production and distribution remains in the hands of countless small producers and distributors, the Socialist ideal is destined to stay among the utter impracticabilities of politics. To-day it is out of the question for a government to step in, take over, and manage the hundreds of thousands of small independent shops and stores and factories that dot the vast expanse of territory from Portland, Oregon, to Portland, Maine.

But what we have hitherto known as "little business" is being everywhere absorbed into giant chains and combinations. The same is true of the little newspapers. Scarcely a week passes, nowadays, without the announcement of some further stride in the steady process of business integration, and there seems to be no likelihood that the movement will come to a stop, for the economies to be secured through consolidation

are demonstrably great. For example, a survey of a group of grocery chains, made some time ago by the Harvard Bureau of Business Research, showed operating expenses to be only fourteen per cent of sales, whereas the average for a group of independent groceries was twenty-eight per cent. With expense ratios running two to one, there can be no doubt what the ultimate future of the grocery business is likely to be. And the same is probably true of all other small business enterprises. In the next few decades they may go the way of the old-time village grist mill, livery stable, and blacksmith shop.

What the business men of the United States do not seem to have fully realized, however, are the social and political implications of this enveloping movement. Let us assume for a moment that it is permitted to continue at an accelerating speed for the next fifty years. Little business, as we know it, will have virtually disappeared. Everybody will be working for the heads of a few great holding companies with interlocking directorates. That is what has already come to pass, or nearly so, in some great industries.

The economic consequences of this unifying movement have been all to the good—elimination of waste, reduction of overhead, higher wages, larger profits, lower prices. But let no individualist overlook the fact that if all the vital instrumentalities of production, distribution, transportation, communication, and credit ever pass under the control of a few giant holding organizations, the inauguration of a Socialist Commonwealth will involve little more than the replacement of a few executives by an equal number of skillful politicians. Our war experience with the railroads showed how easily the thing can be done, and with what consequences to the taxpayer! Mr. Thomas, as a good Socialist (albeit a high-minded and fair-minded one), ought to chuckle over this merging and supermerging rather than waste his ink bemoaning it.

Who own the earth will rule it. That has been true from the beginning of time and doubtless will be to the end. There is no disputing the axiom of political science that the dis-

tribution of power normally follows the distribution of property To the degree, therefore, that we have a wide diffusion of material wealth among the people of any nation, their government would seem to be approaching the democratic ideal rather than moving away from it It is hardly a sound indictment of a democracy to argue that its people have become prosperous, that prosperity lessens their grievances, and that, having fewer grievances, they do not register as much resentment at the polls as they used to do

### III REBUTTAL

NORMAN THOMAS

PROFESSOR MUNRO says, "Who own the earth will rule it" Precisely my point The only thing left for Professor Munro to do is to prove that the effective ownership of the earth or of America is not in the hands of big business, and here he offers us the usual complacent and uncritical generalization about the increase in the number of stockholders and the size of savings bank deposits On the former subject I have recently got an admission from one of our leading statisticians that the number of stockholders is usually arrived at by adding together all the stockholders of various companies without eliminating duplications As to the inadequacy of savings bank deposits as a gauge of economic well-being, I refer Professor Munro and the reader to Dr Abraham Epstein's analysis of the subject in his *Challenge of the Aged*

I grant that there has been an increase in the number of stockholders, but Professor Munro has not challenged my statement that the more scattered such small holdings become, the more effectively can a small group of insiders exercise its control This is exactly what is happening to-day The most

reliable estimate of wealth in America, made by Dr King of the National Bureau of Economic Research, indicates that one per cent of the people own thirty-three per cent of the wealth, ten per cent own sixty-four per cent of the wealth, while the poorest twenty-five per cent own but three and a half per cent of the wealth. A more recent study in Chicago shows that the heads of families of unskilled workers in about seventy per cent of the cases earn annually less than enough to support their families as well as charity societies might support them—thus at a time when 283 people reported an annual income in excess of a million dollars.

“Who own the earth will rule it” no less surely if one of their methods is to create “a property-minded people” with a pathetically inadequate appreciation of the degree of well-being they might have if we managed our great resources and machinery for the common good.

It will be granted that the income tax amendment was one of the few really significant victories of the common man, but isn't the present level of income taxes a result of the war which the economic policy of our business classes brought about? And hasn't big business had astonishing success in getting tax reductions and refunds from the greatest Secretary of the Treasury since Hamilton?

Some of Professor Munro's statements are extraordinary. His implication that England might have used our tariff system instead of her “doles” is amazing economics. If tariffs make “doles” unnecessary, why, then, do the protectionist countries in Europe have to have social insurance similar to doles? Again, he states that the “rabble rouser” (*sic*)—Eugene V Debs—preached a fundamental conflict between industry and agriculture. This is still more amazing if it is intended as history.

I have never expressed discouragement over the growth of mergers, which Socialists have always prophesied. Indeed, it is on the basis of this movement of economic forces that I hope through education to arouse the producing masses to such economic and political organization as will make political

democracy more effective without bringing about an overwhelming catastrophe. But no political democracy will be ultimately successful until we have established real democracy in the ownership and control of property for power. "Who own the earth will rule it."